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PETER RABBIT'S PARLOR ANNUAL

1885

FOR
Boys & Girls

4th YEAR



the 1990s, the number of people with a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health Foundation 1999). The prevalence of mental health problems has increased in the general population, and the incidence of mental health problems has increased in the prison population (Mental Health Foundation 1999).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the mental health needs of prisoners. The Department of Health (2000) has published a strategy for mental health services, which includes a commitment to improve the mental health of prisoners. The Department of Health (2000) has also published a strategy for mental health services, which includes a commitment to improve the mental health of prisoners.

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Per. 2529 e. $\frac{139}{1885}$



Ben. George, London

"DICK SEIZED ME JUST AS I WAS SINKING."



Ben. George, London

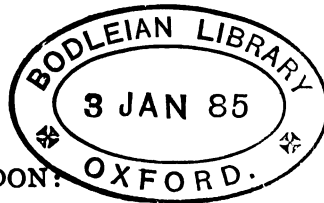


PETER PARLEY'S
ANNUAL

FOR

1885.

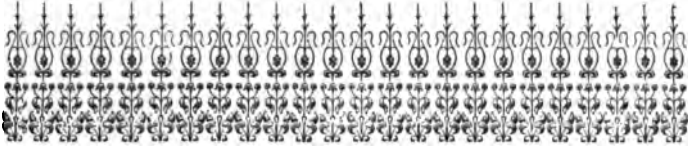
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LONDON: OXFORD.
BEN. GEORGE, 47, HATTON GARDEN, E.C.

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LONDON :
BEN. GEORGE, 47, HATTON GARDEN, E.C.



PREFACE.

DO you know who the Critics are? They are those kind gentlemen who take the trouble to read all the publications which come out at Christmas, and tell us which are best worth buying ; and how they find time to go to church, and eat turkey and plum-pudding as well, I cannot imagine. One of them shirked his work once, and I will tell you how I found him out. We had an account that year in "PETER PARLEY" of two boys who rigged up their boats, and sailed them, and rather ingeniously made them fight on a pond, and we called it, in our facetious way, "Early Naval Architecture." Our kindly, but overworked, critic was deceived by the title, and praised it not wisely, though not, perhaps, too well. He recommended it strongly as an excellent, concise, and most instructive, as well as entertaining account of the rise of the British Navy.

PREFACE.

There was another gentleman who used always to repeat the same objection to us every year. He, indeed, did not profess to open the book ; his disapproval lay deeper than its merits or demerits. We were not Mr. Samuel Goodrich, the original Peter Parley, who died in May, 1860, and that was enough for him. Now I read all the criticisms I can, in hopes of getting hints for improving the *ANNUAL*, for it is never too late to learn, and this writer perplexed me, for I could not see how to satisfy him. However, he possibly made his fortune by literature, and retired, for I have not seen his stereotyped condemnation of our annual attempt to please you for five or six years.

I have often longed to tell those two anecdotes, which have afforded me much secret amusement, and now I have got rid of them in a Preface.

So a Happy New Year to all of you.

PETER PARLEY.





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A Shower of Gold.

CHAPTER I.

AT what age Pedro had first taken charge of cattle, sheep, and pigs, he could not say; it was ever since he could remember. He was now fourteen; his skin was as brown as a nut; his eyes were black, so was his hair, which was never cut, and, I fear, rarely combed. Being the eldest of the family, his father had been glad to make use of him as soon as he could, and since it requires little physical strength to tend sheep and pigs, that was very early. For the cattle, that was different. It was only lately that he had been able to assist his father much at that work; for Spanish mountain cattle are awkward customers, and he who would tend them should ride well, and use the lasso skilfully. Pedro could sit anything, and handle the weighted ropes with quite sufficient accuracy, and you may naturally think that he was glad to be employed in the more exciting work. But this was not the case. It is not often that our lot in life is cast exactly in accordance with our natural tastes.

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

Thousands of English boys now poring over sums, copy books, grammars, and lexicons, would gladly throw all books, pens, ink, and paper to the nettles and thistles, and live in the open air, working their muscles, and giving their brains a holiday. But to Pedro a hard form, a desk, an atlas, a shelf full of primers, and a zealous schoolmaster determined to get all the learning he could into his head, would have constituted Paradise, had the existence of those luxuries been explained to him. As it was, he had taught himself to read, and could even write a little, though the mechanical difficulties were great. The drawing of the figures, and the placing them accurately, interfered much with his practice of sums, but at mental arithmetic he was a marvel, and could have given points to some of the show boys of village schools.

Now, when he had got his sheep out on a grassy slope, or his pigs into the chestnut wood, they required no more attendance than the dog could very well manage, and the whole day could therefore be devoted, with little interruption, to his studies, on which account Pedro much preferred the duties of shepherd or swine-herd, though he was not entirely indifferent to the pulse-stirring delight of subduing the obstinacy of a young bull.

To teach oneself anything is slow work, but extremely fascinating. There is a feeling of triumphant satisfaction whenever a difficulty is mastered which is unknown to those who tread the paths of knowledge with a guide; and then, when you have once got a thing into your head in this unassisted manner, it is fixed there probably for ever—you do not forget it as you very likely may what you have acquired with less difficulty. The great drawback to self-instruction is that you are apt to learn a good deal of error, which has to be

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

unlearned afterwards—you get a lot of chaff with the meal into your bread.

Pedro's parents admired his power of calculating in his head, but did not much like his learning to read; it frightened them rather. A priest must be able to read; but Pedro had no vocation that way, though he could sing a little, too. *Grandeos*, again, of course, could read; but for a peasant—why, it was queer. They could not read, nor their parents before them, nor any of their neighbours. It was useful, of course, at times, especially when business had to be done in the town. But many things seem useful which are not quite right; the enemy of man is very cunning. However, the priest should know best, and he would not absolutely condemn the art, though he shook his head and said that it was a very dangerous power, and apt to lead the rash to heresy. I do not know whether there are any people left who think in this way, even in the out of the way corners of Spain; but this was many years ago.

The charge of cattle suddenly ceased to make any demand upon Pedro's care, for on bringing his pigs home one evening he found that the whole herd had been driven off. His mother was weeping quietly in a corner, his little sister and brother crying out of sympathy, his father stamping up and down, pulling at his hair, and objurgating things in general, and the English nation in particular.

"They have taken all, the *banditti*, all; every hoof, every horn," he said, in explanation to Pedro.

"What, without paying for them?" exclaimed the lad.

"Paying, indeed, a fine payment; not a quarter the value. And I, who expected to get double!"

"Yes, father; you have always told me that the English

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

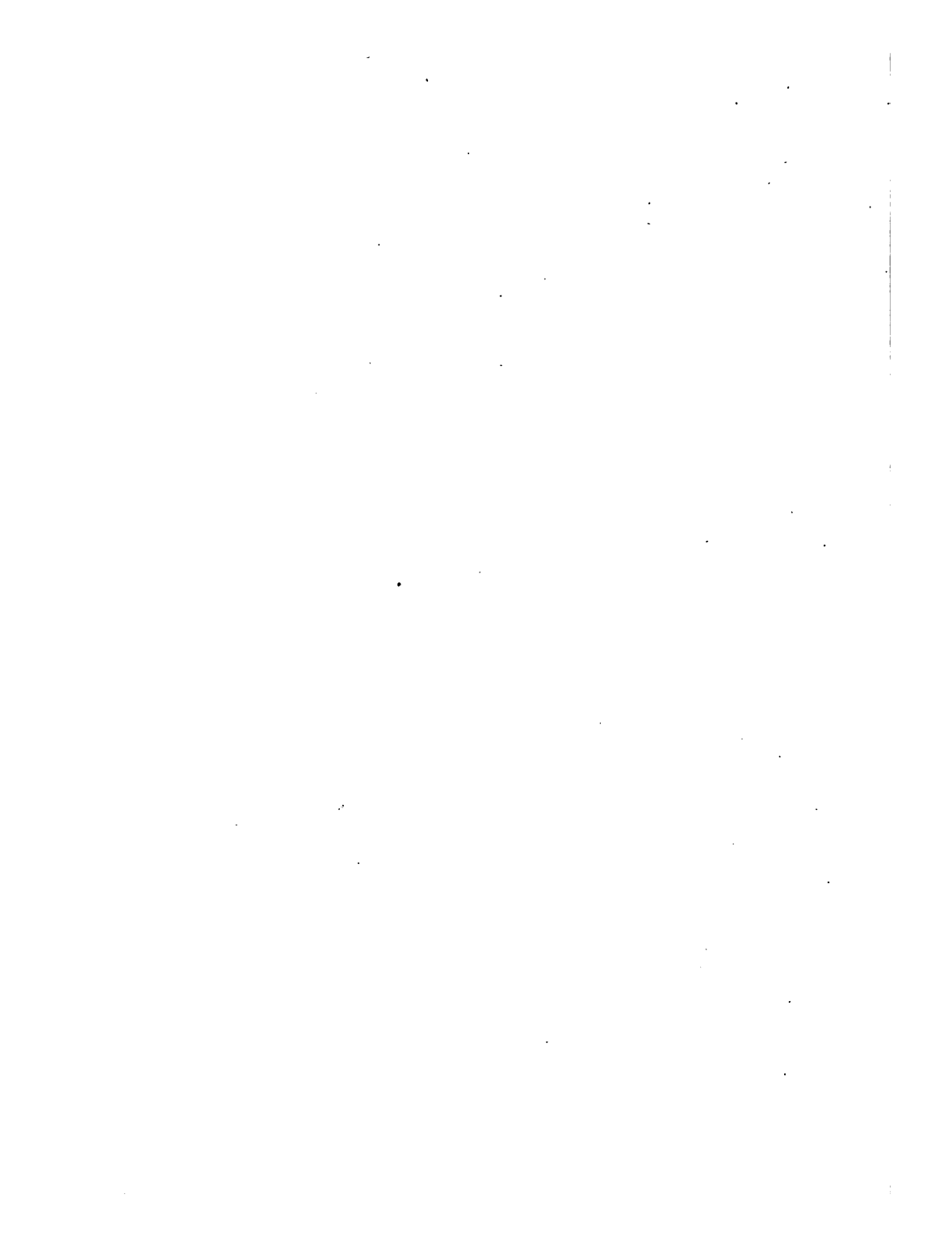
paid so well. Tell me, how did it happen?"

"This morning, at sunrise, directly after you had gone, there came an Englishman, a commissariat officer, and said that he must have meat rations for nine thousand men ready by this evening, and he wanted my cattle. I told him I did not wish to part with them. He replied that he must have them. I said that the English were our allies, and were in Spain to fight with us against the same enemy. He replied that that was no reason why they should starve; it was a necessity, the meat they must have; but that it was no injury to me, I should have my fair price, and if he did not take my cattle the French would pass through here shortly, and they would have every head and pay nothing at all. Or even if our own troops, the Spanish, came, they would only pay in promises, whereas the English gave real cash for all they took. There was truth in all this, as I knew very well, but I was not so foolish as to appear to think so, and I still complained of the hardship to get my price. I need not have troubled, however, for the Englishman was not inclined to haggle much, and he offered two hundred doubloons, which was more than I expected to get, and quite half the sum I first of all named. But when I expected to receive cash, he gave me a piece of paper with writing on it, and told me if I took that to a certain house in Madrid they would give me the money for it. A house in Madrid! Why not in the moon, I asked him? How was I to make a journey to Madrid, passing, too, through all that part of the country where the fighting is going on? He could not help that, he said; he could not carry gold enough about with him to buy all the corn and cattle required. There was an order for my money; and the meat he must have, and would have.



Ben George. London

"HE DESISTED FROM HIS TASK AND GAVE PEDRO HIS BLESSING."



A SHOWER OF GOLD.

Again, I told him that I could not make a fortnight's journey across the mountain, leaving my family, on the chance of turning a piece of paper into money. It might be all right for those who lived in towns and understood such things, but I did not know what to do with this writing, it was of no use to me. Could he not give me less in real money? He said that he only had forty doubloons, and that was his own, not Government money, and it would be very inconvenient to him to part with it. I got so afraid of having nothing at all except a scrap of paper, that I begged him to let me have the forty doubloons, for his men were already collecting and driving off the cattle. So at last he consented, and gave me another paper to put my mark to, and he took that and the other document, which he said was worth two hundred doubloons, and gave me forty, and went off; the pest go with him!"

"Oh, father! how could you be cheated like that?" cried Pedro. "This Englishman will get one hundred and sixty doubloons for himself, for he will keep that paper till he goes to Madrid, and they will give him two hundred for it. You should have taken the paper; the troubles will not last for ever, and then you might have made the journey, or some neighbour would have been going."

"Oh, you are very clever, and your father is a fool, of course. But supposing the French get the best, as they seem to be doing, and drive the English out of Spain, where would my two hundred doubloons have been then? 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.'"

"You might have sent me with the paper then; I would have got to the town, somehow."

The mother, whose tears had ceased when the talking

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

began, now laughed out at her own son's presumption; but the father muttered thoughtfully, "I am not sure that he would not have done it."

He was a man of elastic temperament, very easily discouraged and cast down, but soon throwing off the trouble and reviving again. And now he consoled himself with the thought that when the war was over he could soon turn the forty doubloons into four hundred by the contraband trade. For in early life he had been engaged in the traffic of conveying smuggled goods over the Pyrenees and across the frontier on strings of mules, and he had only relinquished this occupation for the more respectable but less lucrative employment of mountain farming because of a fight with the troops sent to check the free trade, in which several soldiers had been killed, and he knew himself to be a suspected man. But that was several years ago, and there had been many changes, and such important events had happened, that he surely might play the old game again with impunity now, if war would only cease, and trade revive.

I believe that the boy Pedro was much the most seriously vexed. If he had been sent, as he said, to Madrid to cash this money, he would have seen several towns, besides the capital, and might have found out the way to rise in the world. His remonstrance was not the result of self-conceit, or thinking that he knew better than his father, but was simply an expression of disappointment on seeing a chance of what he was always longing for missed.

Spending so much time as he did with no other companion but his dog—for the pigs and sheep could hardly be called company at all—he had thought out many things, and had become convinced that his father's notion of smuggling being

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

the one royal road to fortune was a fallacy. He was always harping upon it; had relinquished it with the deepest regret, and had shown his son many of the cunning hiding places where contraband goods used to be stored, so that if the happy days came back again after his own course was sped, he might start with advantage on the exciting and lucrative career. But even from the low point of view of success, Pedro shrewdly suspected that honesty was the best policy. Even if his father had comprehended that sentiment, however, it is doubtful whether he could have been brought too see that smuggling was in any way dishonest.

That Pedro should have arrived at that conclusion was rather curious, and the process was this. The band to which his father had belonged was broken up and dispersed by soldiers sent on that duty by lawful authorities of the country; therefore, it must have been unlawful, and killing the soldiers nothing less than murder. It might, indeed, be justifiable to evade bad laws, or even to resist their enforcement by arms if a great principle were at stake. But here there was no question of principle. The sole object was to make money faster than could be done by lawful trade or sober industry. I do not mean to say that Pedro put it all to himself so clearly as this, or that he elaborated it entirely out of his inner consciousness; the books he read (an odd volume, or only part of one; upon one subject or another, an old magazine, pamphlet, or paper) helped him amongst them to these and other notions.

The way he came by his library was rather curious. He had found it in an old barrel in one of the smugglers' hiding places shown him by his father, the documents having been brought there to make cartridges with.

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

The boy had not any strong convictions on this or any other social or moral question, and if the string of mules laden with contraband goods had been started again over the mountain paths that week, he would probably have been found helping his father to drive them. But he had a distaste for such work, nevertheless, though he did hanker after some occupation which might afford a better prospect of profit or distinction than his present one.

One morning, a week after the bad bargain made with the English commissariat officer for the cattle, Pedro took his sheep to a patch of pasture amongst the mountains some five miles off. Stumbling over rocky ground, without vegetation enough for a rabbit, you topped a crest, and came suddenly upon this smiling grassy valley, with a stream running through it; quite a Spanish oasis. It was a favourite pasture with our student shepherd; the trees by the stream made a pleasant shade, and the sheep required no attention, either from dog or man, the valley being of small extent, and the unenterprising browsers certain not to stray beyond it, there being nothing to eat outside its limits, unless there are any lapidiverous animals in this world, as well as in the moon; at least, I suppose they eat stones in the moon, as there seems to be nothing else. So, unless a wolf turned up, Pedro considered himself safe from interruption in his studies; and wolves rarely had the pluck to go in for mutton in the daytime.

He was now seated in the shade poring over a life of Pizarro, and wandering in fancy through South American forests, while his dog lay opposite with his nose on his paws and his eyes on his master's, wondering whether there was anyone else half so clever as that master in the world. Presently, however, Sancho grew uneasy, glanced right and

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

and left, sniffed, growled softly at first, then, as he became confident of suspicious circumstances, louder. Finally, he got up and barked, and then three French soldiers appeared upon the scene.

"Keep that dog back, or I'll run my bayonet through him," said one of them in broken Spanish, garnished with French oaths.

Pedro made a sign, and Sancho came to his heels, though reluctantly, with a subdued growl like the mutter of distant thunder.

"So, you stick of garlic! you hide your sheep away where you think we shall not find them, do you? It is a lucky chance that we came upon them at all, and then what would the Colonel have said when the regiment arrived at the bivouac to-night and found nothing to cook? How, say you, comrades, shall I sully my sword by drawing it across his throat? Shall we hang him to the bough of that tree with his belt? Or have we time to tie him up and cut the flesh off his bones with sticks?"

"Plenty of time, corporal; but if I may appeal to your mercy, I would suggest that we merely teach him some slight lessons, such as by cutting his ears or his nose off, this time."

"I swear to you that I was not hiding the sheep away!" cried poor Pedro in great terror. "Good gentlemen! brave soldiers! do not hurt a poor boy who has done no harm. I did not know you were anywhere near; then, why should I be concealing the sheep? Pasture is scarce, and this is a place I take in its turn, and that came round to-day. The blessed Saint Jago knows that I am telling the truth."

"Superstitious savage! it may be so, whether your idol knows it or not. The Frenchman is by nature magnanimous,

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and this time I spare you. Drive then your sheep at once to the village of Elmade, where our advanced guard is. At once, name of a pipe! No hesitation! Send your dog to collect them, sacr-r-r-r-r-r-r-r! If they are not at the village within two hours you had better not have been born. You are afraid of death, you think it an evil; well, you shall learn to think it the greatest blessing, to call for it as the last favour, tonner-r-r-r-re."

When Corporal Boirsec twirled his moustache and rolled his r's, he expected to inspire terror; but he looked more fierce than cruel, and Pedro, though certainly not at his ease, and shuddering at the threats, which were quite sufficiently intelligible in the foreign jargon, affected a good deal more fear than he felt. He showed great alacrity, called the corporal captain, and sent Sancho to collect the sheep. The Frenchmen did not know that he was making private signs to the dog, which caused him to separate the flock, and drive them hither and thither.

"At Elmade, in two hours, most noble captain; I and my dog can do it if, of your great magnanimity, you will condescend to spare our lives. But if it should be a few minutes longer, I pray you to be merciful. A sheep will break away sometimes, and has to be pursued, and brought back."

"No excuses; I have said two hours, and in two hours I shall come to look, for if you have not arrived, result: you die in torments; thousand bombs! What have you got in that skin? Hum! Black wine. Sweet and thick; but still, wine is always wine."

And after taking a pull he passed it to his comrades.

"And in that wallet? Black bread, an onion, of course, and a slice of melon," continued the corporal, appropriating

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

Pedro's dinner. "Coarse fare; but in war, as in war. We shall have mutton for supper, at any rate."

And with several other strenuous injunctions to follow them at once with the flock, the soldiers disappeared in the direction of the village they had named.

Why did they not remain to see that their orders were obeyed? Because they were in a situation of some risk, about three miles in advance of their company, which was at Elmade, and that had been pushed somewhat imprudently far in front of the regiment, which, in turn, was feeling the way for the brigade. So that these three adventurers had to exercise great caution, or they might suddenly find themselves in the presence of a British or Spanish rear-guard, or, worse still, a knot of guerillas, who gave no quarter.

But Corporal Boirsec was famous as a forager; a song having been composed in praise of his exploits in that way, which was trolled out during many a weary march, and by the side of many a bivouac fire, so that he had a reputation to maintain, and when he could not hunt out ammunition for the mouth close to the halting place, he extended his researches until he was successful. His motto was, in the words of the song alluded to—

"Ye comrades, who see me descend to the plain,
Shall see me with victuals, or never again!"

Which sounds like a parody on a couplet of Byron's. But the song was in French, and Byron had not written his lines at that time—so the carping reader is not quite so clever as he thought himself, you see.

Directly the three were out of sight, Pedro made a sign to the dog, who immediately headed the sheep, and turned them in a precisely opposite direction, higher up amongst the

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

mountains.

"Bad enough to let the cattle go for so poor a price," he said out loud, a habit those who are much alone often fall into; "I am not going to give the sheep away to these detestable Frenchmen for nothing, and get beaten, and perhaps murdered, for my pains; not likely! I hope the villains will not find the pigs. I hope, above all, that they will not come upon the homestead, at any rate, before father and mother have time to escape."

A qualm came over him when he thought of them, and his little brother and sister, the one ten, the other nine years old. Very horrible cruelties were inflicted by stragglers of the armies in Spain upon the peasantry, either for the sake of extorting the secret of concealed money, or out of sheer wanton barbarity. All armies complain loudly of the inhumanity of their enemies in war time, and they are all quite right. *We* cannot throw stones. The war between France and Germany, which overthrew the Second Empire, was, I fancy, the first in which any effective method was adopted to protect non-combatants from murder and outrage.

And so Pedro shuddered at the idea of what might be going on at the farm. But remembrance of the very sharp look out kept by his father, who had made all preparations for escaping with his family to a place of safety, should the French army unfortunately pass near his home, re-assured him, and soon his principal trouble was, that the soldier had taken away his frugal dinner, for he was beginning to feel very hungry. He had no hesitation as to where to drive the sheep; there was a mountain gorge, the secret of which had been shown him by his father, which he had often marked in his mind as a perfect place of refuge. It had been much used in former times

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

by the smugglers, who had stabled relays of mules in the large caverns, which honey-combed the rocks. There was a little herbage outside and around these, coarse and scant indeed, but still sufficient to keep grazing animals alive, though not to fatten them, and there was water, only a trickling rivulet, but still water.

After a good long tramp, just at the time, in fact, when the French soldiers at Elmade were beginning to use strong language at his non-arrival, and Corporal Boirsec was laughing to scorn the idea of his having dared to give them the slip, Pedro arrived at a wild barren spot directly beneath the hermitage. About a hundred feet above the path he followed, several huge boulders, arrested in their fall by a ledge, had been heaped together in such a manner as to form a rude hut, perfectly sheltered overhead, and on three sides, and partially so on the fourth. This den had been taken possession of by a monk, who was anxious to punish himself for a crime committed in early life, by an existence of penitential isolation.

In the palmy days of smuggling, his solitude was frequently broken in upon ; the free traders, one of whose routes skirted the holy man's abode, often calling in for a cup of water, for shelter, or merely for a chat. But since they often availed themselves of his religious ministrations, and he had been enabled to administer the last rites of the church to several poor fellows, who would otherwise have had to leave the world without that consolation ; he doubtless felt it his duty to remain. And then these intruders rarely came empty handed, and so he was saved many a tramp round the country for the doles upon which he principally subsisted, thus gaining more time for prayer and meditation.

"I wonder whether Father Paul is still there," said Pedro

A SHOWER OF GOLD.

to himself, "if so, he may have some bread and cheese to spare me, and so save my having to kill a sheep."

And leaving Sancho to keep the flock moving slowly forwards, he clambered up to the strange niche. Finding it empty, but bearing signs of recent occupation, he went a bit higher up the hill-side, to where there was a little hollow, not visible till you were close upon it, in which some soil had accumulated, and here, with infinite toil, the hermit had made a miniature garden, where he raised onions, garlic, melons, and had trained a vine, and here he was now hoeing. He desisted from his task, and gave Pedro his blessing; then he sat down on a rock, in a way which invited a chat, for Father Paul was a good sort of fellow and quite free from affectation; moroseness had nothing to do with his voluntary banishment from society, nor vanity either.

He had known Pedro from his birth, and when he went his rounds, he always left the farm with his sack very much heavier than when he entered it. And in addition to the flour contributed on these occasions, the boy had not unfrequently been sent to the hermitage with an offering of eggs, or bacon, or a skin of wine, when such provisions chanced to be very plentiful.

Pedro now sat down beside him, and told his story of how the French had come and wanted to take his sheep, and how he was driving them to the old hiding place, where he intended to lie quiet for a few days, and then steal out and watch till the enemy had passed. And if the Father had any provisions to spare, could he let him have them? otherwise it was no matter, he would kill a sheep. Father Paul replied, that fortunately that very morning he had made his provision of bread for the next fortnight, and had plenty of meal left for more.

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And he took the lad to his grot, and gave him a loaf and a cheese of goat's milk, a melon, and as many onions and heads of garlic as he liked to take. He also comforted him concerning those at home, assuring him that no evil would be allowed to befall a family, which had always shown so much zeal in the performance of its religious duties, and so sent him on his way rejoicing.

He soon caught up Sancho and the sheep, and strolled on, munching a slice of bread and an onion with great satisfaction. It was still early in the evening when he reached his destination, which was fortunate, for after dark, or even in the dusk he might easily have missed the place. A trickling rivulet meandered into the valley from the right, and following that he came to a cleft in the rocks, not cutting straight in, but glancing for a dozen yards to the left, then to the right, then to the left again, so that the gorge it led to was completely masked, and you might pass it fifty times without guessing its existence.

Taking that thread of water, which in places where the stones were large and loose was a mere dampness, for a clue to the labyrinth, however, you came to a deep cleft in the mountain, in one part, fifty yards broad, in another, ten, in another, barely five and at one place arched over by a natural bridge of rock, six hundred feet overhead at least. And across this ran the only road by which that part of the mountain could be traversed, at least by anybody but a mountaineer, carrying his own luggage on his back, and prepared to do actual climbing.

I do not know how to give you any correct idea of this gorge, for its caverns were not what we generally understand by the term, but were formed by huge masses of rock, falling

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together in all directions, leaving cracks and crevices, through which light came in from above.

But there was plenty of good shelter, and it was snug enough, and safe enough. If the French ever came along the road overhead, they could not see him, or his sheep; or if they did they could not get at them without going quite ten miles round.



CHAPTER II.

IF some of his former partners at Almacks could have seen Captain Algernon Walton, as he followed a string of mules on the edge of a precipice, they would have had considerable difficulty in recognizing him.

A new dance had been introduced in those days, called the waltz, and the initiated were somewhat rare. Algy Walton was one of the privileged few who were perfect in it, and when he joined his regiment in Spain, he enjoyed the rare distinction of being really missed in the very highest circles of London society. The image he left behind him was that of a fair young man, with regular features, a pink and white complexion, two inches of whisker on each cheek (for no man who was not in the cavalry ever wore a moustache), sleepy eyes, a languid manner, and a musical, but rather affected voice, dressed as those are who consider the toilet as the most important matter of human life.

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What his friends would have seen if he could have been presented to them at that moment, was a sun-burnt, hardy looking fellow, who had not been shaved for several days; whose epaulets were tarnished; whose coat was of a light brick colour, covered with large purple patches, and torn in several places; whose boots had burst, so that the stockings could be seen through the crevices.

When they came to a place where the path turned abruptly round the sharp corner of a rock, Walton called to his subaltern,

"I say, Conkey! just stop here with a file of men till we are round the next turning. Conceal yourself, you know, but keep an eye on the path we have just come; you can do it between those two bits of rock if you lie down. I fancy the French are quite close, but have not fired lately to lull us into carelessness; if so, they will show themselves when they think we are clear. Give them a few shots if they do; make a little stand, in fact, to see whether they are coming on in any strength. If they are, and press forward, come after us at once."

"All right!" said the lad, whose aquiline nose had earned him the nickname of Conkey, and who looked even more dilapidated than his captain, a recent flesh wound having stained his uniform with blood.

Indeed, the whole escort bore a war-worn and distressed appearance. Several of the men had blood-stained handkerchiefs tied round their legs, arms, or heads, and all their faces told a tale of fatigue and want of sleep.

Their story was this. Gold for the payment of the troops had to be sent from the sea coast to the head quarters of the —th Division on a string of mules across the mountains,

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and the Selsea Rangers were ordered to escort it. Spies brought word to the French of the expedition, and the route the convoy would take ; and as the sum of money was a very large one, the French general thought it worth while to incur some risk in the endeavour to intercept it. A large body of infantry, supported by mountain howitzers, was therefore pushed to a perilous distance from its base, and by almost incredibly rapid marches succeeded in cutting in upon the escort when it was still some fifteen miles distant from the outposts of the division.

The Rangers fought desperately, and though the majority were cut to pieces, or dispersed amongst the mountains, a couple of hundred men managed to get the string of mules with their precious cargo through the pass where they were attacked, and on to a narrow path, with a wall of rock on one side, and a precipice on the other, where there was barely room for two men to march abreast, so that superiority of numbers was of no avail to the pursuers.

The escort toiled on all night, goading the unhappy mules forward with their bayonets, the enemy following in their track, and, when daylight came, pelting them, whenever they had a chance, with bullets.

For the last hour or more, however, this annoyance had ceased, and Walton, who found himself the senior officer present, began to hope that he was nearing the friendly outposts, and that the French, afraid of being cut off, had relinquished the pursuit. It was all hope ; for whether he was taking the right road he did not know for certain. The guide had either run away, or been killed ; and he could only guess the proper direction to make for by the compass, which was not easy steering when the path wound about like a serpent.

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A shot; a second shot close at hand, replied to by a sputtering of musketry in the distance, showed him that the French had not yet turned from the trail; and presently the Ensign and his two men came running up with the report that the enemy were pressing forward. Soon afterwards the leading mule fell, utterly exhausted—dying even—and before the path could be cleared of the carcase, shots came amongst them from the enemy, and two men and another mule went down.

"The French must not have the cash if we can help it," cried Walton. "Send the barrels over the precipice; sharp with it, all of you!"

And he set the example by cutting the ropes of one pack, and toppling the load down.

It was all done in a minute; the rear files held the enemy in check, while the rest bowled the small casks filled with gold down the rocks. Bang! Bounce! Smash! they went, the staves bursting and splitting, and the coins flying out like sparks from an exploding rocket.

It is not many who can accumulate in a lifetime of toil the money that was thus scattered to the wolves and eagles in a few seconds.

Then the retreat continued, the mules being abandoned; and now that there was nothing to delay them, it was rapid enough. Every now and then, if closely pressed, they turned at bay, savage with fatigue, hunger, thirst, and the consciousness of failure.

The nature of the ground gave an advantage to those who were retiring, for they could take advantage of angles and blocks of rock to get a fair shot at their foremost pursuers, and then run on to the next point of vantage before the others

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could get to the front. So the French soon found that they were losing men for nothing, and also running the risk of finding themselves in the midst of overpowering numbers, for the convoy had not gone much out of its course, and was working towards its right destination.

They had not seen the upset of the barrels, and could not think what had become of the money, and why the mules had no burdens, unless they had been hoodwinked into following the wrong lot, while the treasure was being conveyed in another direction. And so, after awhile, they drew off, and the harassed Rangers were no longer molested. And after a couple of hours further march they were challenged by an outlying picquet of their friends, and Walton made his way to head quarters to tell his disastrous story.

The General was mad not to get the money he had counted upon, and though he was just and generous enough not to blame the fainting officer who had done his very best to retrieve a misfortune for which he was in no way responsible, he could not force himself to be very cordial in manner, and Walton was very glad to get clear of his presence. The Staff offered him such hospitality as was in their power; but a good drink and a sleep were all he craved for at the moment, long as he had gone without food.

What did the troops do for their pay? Why they had to wait awhile, and then more was sent out. Whose loss was it then? Yours and mine. It went to make part of that National Debt, to pay the interest of which we are taxed so heavily. Do you say that it is nothing to you; you pay no taxes? I beg your pardon! Almost everything you buy is taxed more or less; and your father, besides all this, has to pay down good lump sums, as you will have to do some fine

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day ; never fear, my little victim !

It is generally a future generation that has to pay for the extravagances of the present ; therefore, babies ought to have votes. There is a new political cry for you, quite as reasonable as some that are flying about. But politics are dreary ; let us return to our sheep and their shepherd.



CHAPTER III.

PEDRO was not in a greater fright than he had a right to be when he heard firing going on overhead. He knew that the combatants had something else to think about at the moment than plunder, and, besides, they could not get at him, as it was impossible even for a goat to clamber down the rocks just there. But still, one side or the other would get the better and remain masters of the pass, and if these saw the sheep they might mark the place and come round to it after them. And if it were the French, and they recognised him as the boy who had given them the slip, it was a very bad look out for him indeed. He was also dismayed and disappointed to find that troops were still in the neighbourhood, for he hoped that they might have passed on, and was on the point of venturing out in the direction of his home on an exploring expedition, when the sound of musketry in the distance drove him back. And when the shots approached, and reached the heights above the very gorge where he had taken refuge, he retired into the large cavern, where he had heaped up rushes and coarse grass for a bed, and lay there listening and speculating upon what would happen next.

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The time passed very slowly, for he was too anxious to be able to fix his attention on his beloved books, though there was light enough for reading the very smallest print; and as he lay on his rushes he could see the blue sky through many a fissure overhead.

Not only sun rays, but more tangible objects could find their way through these cracks, apparently, for suddenly there was a rattling, and something hit him on the face and chest, causing him to jump up and escape to a more sheltered spot, for these small stones might be the precursors of some huge mass of rock which had been dislodged, and would follow presently.

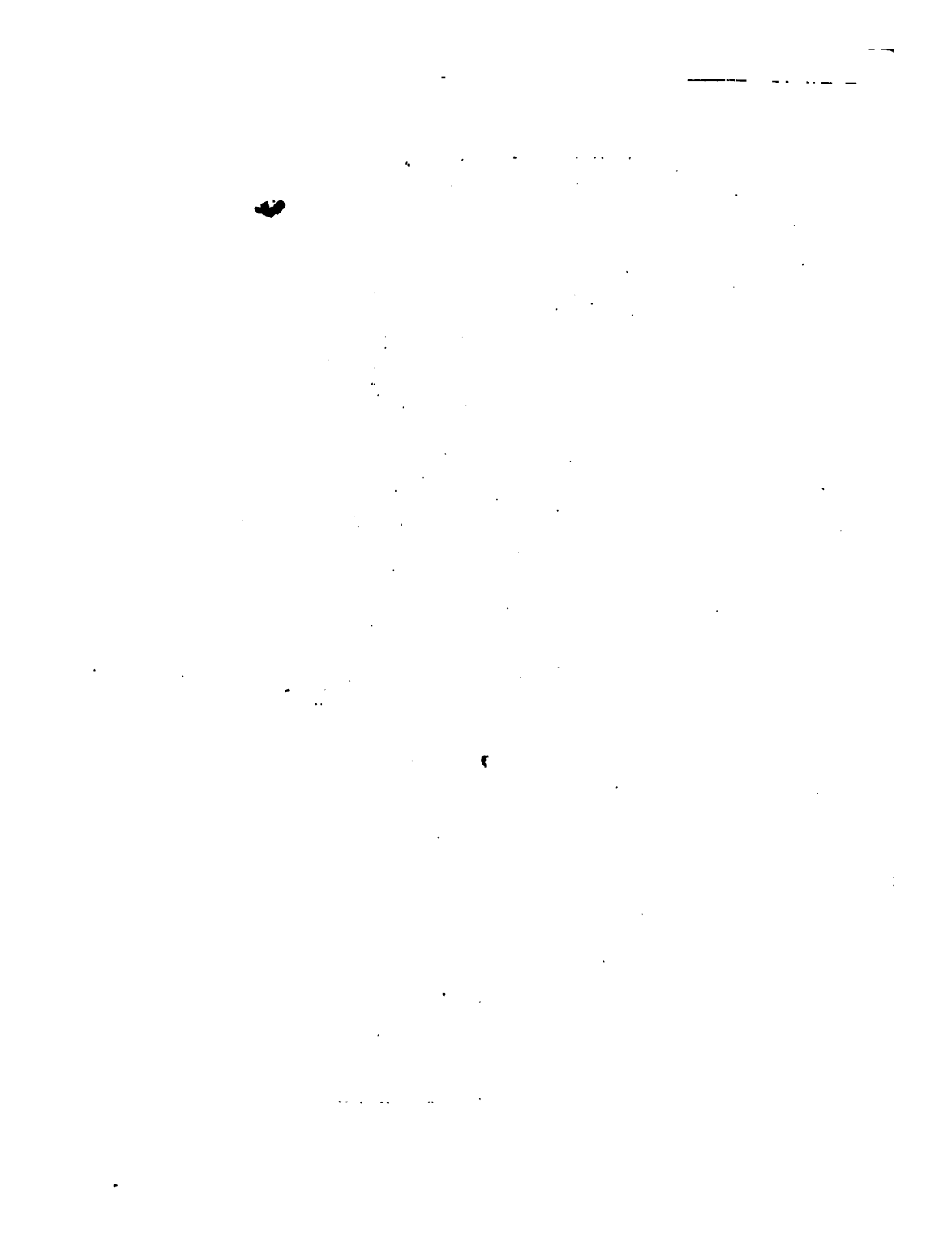
No such boulder came, but there was another and more copious shower of diminutive objects, which glittered curiously as they fell with a metallic ring.

Pedro picked one up; it was a gold coin! Twenty! fifty! a hundred of them did he pick up in the small space, and all around more were scattered.

Soon he had a considerable heap; and a new fear seized upon him lest someone should surprise him, friend or foe mattered not, everyone was a foe now who should see the treasure. Why, if he could only secure that, he might go to Madrid, become a student, and realise all his dreams!

Though half an hour before the idea of any other human being coming into that gorge would have been the last to occur to him, he now looked suspiciously round before he selected a hiding place. There was an old leather sack which he had found in an inner cave, a relic of the smuggling days, and into this he put all the gold he could collect.

Where to hide it? His first idea was to dig a hole and bury it, but it occurred to him that some dog might smell the leather and scratch it up.



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In one of the recesses, which was almost dark, there was a ledge of rock twelve feet from the ground, and climbing up to this he found a hole which would hold the bag nicely. It was a million to one that no one ever looked there, though they came to search, so he decided on that spot, and took note of the ground about that he might be sure of finding it again.

Though this hunting on Tom Tiddler's ground lasted a couple of hours, it was still quite early in the day when the arrangements described were completed, and Pedro once more issued from the labyrinth of caverns.

All sounds of firing had long ceased, and nothing could be heard but now and then a faint baa from his own sheep. Cautiously he went to a point from which part of the mountain road above was visible; there was not a living thing upon it, though a bird of prey was hovering overhead, probably attracted by the body of some poor fellow whose campaigns were over. Then he issued from the gorge, and looked up and down the wider valley; all was stillness and desolation. So he returned, and commenced clambering up the rocks which roofed in the cavern, for it was not possible that the whole of the gold should find its way through the crevices without any lodging outside.

He now learned what the *auri sacra fames* was. The hunger for gold caused that for food to be forgotten, and he spent the entire day in searching for the scattered coins.

It was, indeed, a fascinating pursuit. The digger has to wash his sand, or crush his quartz (it is but rarely he comes upon a nugget), and under the most fortunate circumstances he has to sell his gold with considerable risk and trouble before it becomes serviceable. But the lucky Pedro was working a mine, where the gold was all ready coined and fit

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for use ; no wonder he was determined to make the best use of his time.

When it was too dusk to search any more, he had filled his wallet and pockets with precious pieces, which he added to his deposit, and then he felt ravenous. His bread was all gone, and he determined to kill a sheep. So, with the aid of Sancho, who was also in need of a dinner, he separated one from the flock, and drove it into another cavern a hundred yards further up the gorge than that which he had selected for his residence.

Though not, of course, an artistic butcher, he knew how to kill, skin, and cut up a sheep after a fashion, and he had already made preparations for a fire in that place, expecting to be driven into sacrificing one of his flock before he could get away. So it was not so very long before he had some mutton stakes frizzling in the embers.

Even supposing there was anybody in the neighbourhood, no gleam of the fire penetrated beyond the cavern, and the smoke, filtering slowly through innumerable fissures, could hardly have been perceptible in the daytime, let alone the night. So Pedro felt safe and comfortable, except for a certain anxiety concerning the safety of his family, which he could not quite reason himself out of, but which was not strong enough to prevent his sleeping soundly.

He was up at dawn, and spent the greater part of the day in a renewed search for gold coins, for some hours with success ; but in the course of the afternoon the vein seemed to be worked out, and he lit on no more little heaps or scattered atoms of the precious metal.

He now thought that there was a chance of the French having passed through the neighbourhood ; at any rate he

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would investigate and see. If he started at once he would reach the homestead just about nightfall.

So, leaving his sheep under the charge of Sancho, and his treasure in its hiding place, taking only one gold piece in his pocket, he set out; not retracing his steps, indeed, for now that he was not encumbered with the flock, he could take short cuts. He brought some meat with him, and looked in at the hermitage as he passed, but finding Father Paul absent, left it for him.

Not a soul did he meet, not a sound did he hear during his walk; and now, when he topped that ridge, his home would be in sight, for the sun had not quite sunk, for he had come fast.

He stood on the ridge and looked down, rubbed his eyes, and looked again. There should be the house not a quarter of a mile off; but where was it? He could not be mistaken. No! There was the pulpit rock, and there the chestnut wood, but not a vestige of a habitation to be seen. Only, in its place, he could distinguish a film of smoke curling up from the ground.

With a cry of horror Pedro dashed forwards. His fears were too true. The house, the stables, the sheds, everything had been burned to the ground. And his father and mother, and Pepita, and little Henrique; what had become of them? He hardly dare look about among the ashes, for fear of what he might see there.

At last he sat down on a stone which had been used as a mounting block, and fairly broke down.

A hand was laid on his shoulder, and a familiar voice said, "Pedro!"

And looking up he saw his father.

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"Thank God!" he cried, "you, at least, are alive. And my mother, Pepita, Henrique?"

"All safe in the Lair of Hurtado, only fretting about you. I was in the chestnut wood, watching, for I knew you would come back here if you were alive, and at liberty."

The Lair of Hurtado was a grotto in the mountain about three miles off, difficult of access, the entrance being reached by a track along which only one person could approach at a time, and as in parts of this it was desirable to use hand as well as foot, a determined man, possessing firearms, could defy any number of antagonists who wished to take him out of it.

An outlaw, named Hurtado, had lived in this den in former years, and when at last he was taken and garotted, it was named after him by the mountaineers of the district, who never spoke of it though to strangers, but preserved the secret of the hiding place in case of some such emergency as the present.

"When I found all desolate, I feared the worst," said Pedro.

"Ah! ten thousand curses on those French wolves!" cried his father. "If it were not for the mother and the young ones I would join the guerillas; they have rare chances of vengeance, at times. As it is, if ever I come upon a Frenchman straggling, sick or disabled, he shall plead for death before it comes to him. Was not plunder enough for them? Why must they burn everything when they had no further need of the shelter? Luckily I got the mother and the young ones away before they came, to the wood at first, and then to the Lair at night. And they did not get the money I received from the Englishman for the cattle either; I buried that in a safe place in the orchard, and it has not been disturbed. But what is that? We are homeless and ruined. The pigs are

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all scattered in the wood (the brigands could only shoot down six of them, they were so dispersed), and we shall never collect them again; and I suppose the sheep have fallen into their hands?"

"Not yet," replied Pedro. "I drove them to the Black Gorge, where I left them with Sancho, this afternoon. And I have found a treasure."

"A treasure?"

"Yes; capfuls and capfuls of gold coins. There was fighting on the path above, and it was all thrown over. I collected all I could, but there must be still more, most likely in other parts. Anyhow, there is plenty to build all the farm again, when better times come."

"Build the farm? Aye, and to buy a string of mules, and start in the contraband trade again, once this war over. We will make our fortune, my lad, and you shall be a fine gentleman yet. But where is this money you have collected?"

"In a cavern of the Black Gorge. Suppose we all go there; I had to kill a sheep, and there is most of the meat left."

"Yes; and if we all hunt, we may find some more gold."

"Very likely, father."

So it was arranged that Pedro should return at once to the Black Gorge, and that his father should go to the Lair of Hurtado, and bring the others over in the morning.

They had made their escape on a couple of horses, and though these could not be got up to the Lair, they had remained in safety where they were picketed on a lower part of the mountain, and were available.

Pedro found everything at the cavern as he had left it; and when the rest of the family arrived in the morning, there was a general search organised, and one or two other puddles of

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the golden shower were lit upon, but nothing equal to Pedro's first find.

The tide of war rolled away from that district, and they returned to the farm and built another house, carrying the gold thither, and burying it in a secret place, never whispering a word of their luck to the neighbours ; and before very long they heard that a treaty had been signed, and the French and English armies were about to leave the country. Whereupon Pedro opened his heart to his parents, and told them how he longed to go to Madrid, and study, and become a lawyer, or a doctor, or a merchant, something in which he would have to work with his head rather than his hands. His father owned that the money-shower was his by rights, but he thought it was very foolish to employ it for anything but smuggling. The mother, however, thought differently ; and it was decided that the youth should take his own course, and have half the money collected in the Gorge.

"And how will you carry all that gold safely, without being robbed and murdered on the way ?" asked his father.

"I have thought of that," said Pedro. "I am going to take a couple of leather bags of ore from the place over yonder, where they began to work for silver, and gave it up because they did not find enough to pay. I shall say that there is another company forming to try again, and I am their agent. There will be a little ore at the top of the bags, and the gold coins underneath."

"And when you reach Madrid, what will you do then ?"

"Oh, I know the name of a good banker, the man who sends out the government lottery tickets which you always buy, though you have never yet drawn a prize ; I shall go straight to his bank, and lodge my money there. And then I

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have learned a hotel where students lodge, and I shall go there next, and they are sure to be able to give me all the information I want."

"Go, my son," said Pedro's father; "it seems to me that you are well able to take care of yourself."

So one morning Pedro saddled the horse he was to have, and carefully adjusting his precious wallets, and taking a tender farewell of his family, started on his journey.

He arrived at Madrid without any adventure worth speaking of, and carried out his carefully devised programme. No Scotchman could be more canny than he was, and no rogue, as might naturally be anticipated, got hold of his money.

He began studying in earnest at once, and his desire to make up for lost time was so strong, that he was indifferent to all the temptations of the metropolis.

The profession he finally determined upon was the law; and when he was qualified to practice, he had enough money left to buy a really good partnership, and became very prosperous.

He was anxious to share his fortunes with his family, but though they were glad to come and see him, and enjoy the spectacle of a really first-class bull fight, they preferred living in their native mountains, where, indeed, they prospered considerably, ostensibly by cattle breeding, but, perhaps, running contraband goods over the frontier had a little to do with it.





"Christopher Rayn:"

or

The Founders of Raynborough, Vict:



ADVENTUROUS life?" Hardly! But when I was about seventeen I had adventure enough to satisfy most men. It did not last long, though, and things have run smoothly, and prosperously ever since.

I am a Cornishman by birth, and began to earn my living at Treweath & Co.'s, in Falmouth. In the same employ was a bold ready-witted fellow, four years my senior, named Stephen Morton. A capital hand at every sport, indoor and outdoor, he was deservedly popular. I used to think him the best-hearted lad in the world, and so he was—in a certain sense.

I had been in my situation a couple of years, when one of the firm discovering that an account had not been sent out, because the postings had not been made, looked through the ledger, and noted that Steve's work generally was very carelessly done, and much behind-hand. Mr. Morton, who was supposed to have gone to the bank, was in consequence asked for, and coming in a moment afterwards, was told of the enquiry.

Good fortune had spoilt Steve. He had developed quite

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a new character; he seemed to have made up his mind that he was so important in the office, that we could not get on without him, and at the same time he lost no opportunity of finding fault with everybody and everything.

The country was then greatly excited at the news of the gold discoveries in Australia, and Falmouth, as being the packet station and the chief port of a mining county, was in high ferment. Steve had been touched by the fever, and in frequent conversations, had enlarged on the absurdity of toiling hard in an office, when fortunes could be made in the open air with so little trouble as at the Antipodes.

When he was told that he would have to explain why the ledger postings were so far behind, he declared that he was glad of it, would give as good as he got, had long made up his mind to turn out, &c., &c. But I daresay you yourselves have met with the foolish sort of lad that Steve proved to be.

He left. "Sacked himself," as he phrased it, "and a good job, too." To speak plainly, he had been unpardonably insolent.

He went to his desk, which had a screen round it, cleared out his private things, made a list of the books and vouchers he handed over, and, throwing the pay-in slip book into the safe as he passed, gave his key up to Mr. Crosby, and bade him good-bye.

As he put on his coat, I asked him what he thought of doing.

"Oh! I shall go to Australia, of course. Didn't I tell you I had been saving to pay the passage-money? By-the-bye, you might jot down the outward-bounders from the paper, when it comes in to morrow, and send round to my lodgings. The sooner I go the better. Ta! Ta!" And away he went.

"CHRISTOPHER KAYRN : " OR

In the evening I called at his lodgings, but found that he had not been there. Thinking he had gone off to his father, who was a cousin of mine on the mother's side, I attached no importance to his absence, though it certainly crossed my mind that he might have said something about it.

The next afternoon—how well I remember it! I was sent to the bank for the pass-book, made up to date, "including the cheque paid in yesterday."

"What cheque?" said the cashier. "There was no cheque received here on your account yesterday. Here, wait, I will give you a memo."

As soon as I returned, Mr. Treweath snatched up the slip-book, put it into his pocket, and walked out.

In about an hour I heard, to my horror, that the initial on the counterfoil of the slip was a forgery, that the uncrossed cheque, instead of being paid in by Steve, had been cashed by him at the rival bank, on which it was drawn, and that at six o'clock on the last evening he had sailed in the *Mandolier* for Melbourne.

I had not recovered the shock at this news when the chief clerk came up to my desk and said, very stiffly—

"Were you in the governor's office during the dinner-hour?"

"Ye—yes!" I replied, rather startled, for I had, as I thought, unobserved, been copying out the list of ships for Stephen.

"What were you doing there?"

"Oh, nothing in particular."

"Well, the governor wants to see you; he thinks it is particular."

On entering the private room, Mr. Treweath held up a bundle of notes, and looking me straight in the face, asked—

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"What have you been doing at my table?"

"Nothing, Sir."

"Nothing! Why this is your handwriting, is it not?"

And he pointed to the piece of blotting paper on which I had dried the envelope enclosing the list to Steve.

"Oh, yes, Sir. I wrote a letter here."

"Like your impudence, I think. But what made you touch the drawer?"

"I did not, Sir."

"Sure?"

"Yes, Sir. Quite."

"I left some notes locked up here before I went out, and now I find that a ten pound note is missing."

"I have not opened the drawer, Sir, and I know nothing of the notes."

"You said you had been doing nothing at the table."

"Neither had I, Sir, in a serious sense; and I assuredly knew and know nothing of the money."

"You are the only person that has been in the room."

The fact was, that he thought I was a thief like Stephen. Well, it is not a pleasant matter to talk about. I lost my self-control entirely. For some time I foolishly refused to tell him why I had been in the room, and when I did, he took the view I feared he would. The conclusion was too obvious—Stephen had stolen the cheque, and I had been carrying on the same game, and telling him the best way to get out of the country! The end was, that my wages were paid me to date, and I was there and then turned adrift.

Hardly knowing what I was doing, I found my way down to the harbour. I was almost mad with anger and grief. I felt that I was wronged, and ruined. Father and mother had

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been dead for some years. Friend I had none ; my only relative was the cousin I have mentioned, a grim, determined man, who knew not what mercy or sympathy meant, and who, nettled by his experience of Steve, would disown me, either as a thief, and as a fool for having acted so as to be thought one.

Lost in thought, I was leaning over a rail, looking at, or, rather, far beyond the waters of the bay.

A voice broke in on my thoughts.

" And how are you, Kit ? "

I remember the tone so well, cheery and true in its ring as ever was the voice of man in this world.

It was Dick Webb. I said that I had no friend—well, I spoke hastily. Dick was a fisherman at Mewgerro, where, a few years back, I had spent many a happy day. A friend he had been ; a friend he was to me now, in very truth. He was a tall, powerful, well-favoured fellow, of boundless good humour and good nature ; one who, out of his trade, would give himself infinite pains to do a kind action, providing that he never got paid for it, and in his trade would never abate a jot of his " rights," or do a stroke of work that he did not get full value for. Between a man as a fellow-man, and a man as a customer, Dick drew a very broad distinction indeed. Standing at the parting of the ways, as I was on that afternoon, it was indeed fortunate that he should have seen me.

" Glad to run across you, my lad. And how are you, really ? " said he, as we shook hands.

" Not very bright, Dick, thank you."

" Anything up ? " asked he, still holding my hand.

" Yes. Oh ! Dick,"—and here I broke into tears—" He thinks I am a thief."

" Who's he ? "

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"Mr. Treweath. I have left his place. He sent me off. He says I stole ten pounds."

"Did you?"

"No, Dick, you know I did not."

"Do you know who did?"

"No! He called me in and—" Well, I told Dick all that had passed, and when I had ended, he laid his hand on my shoulder, and said—

"And what's your next move?"

"That is what I was thinking about."

"Come with me!"

"Where to?"

"The Diggings!"

"The what?"

"The Gold Diggings, Australia."

"Australia! But the passage?"

"Come in the *Magic*!"

"The *Magic*! Your lugger! Why its fourteen thousand miles!"

"What of that? We are going in her. Look ye here. I'll tell you all about it. You know a couple of years ago I got married, and now my poor wife is dead, and I have nobody to stop here for. Times are very bad, and seem to be going from bad to worse. Jim, who was up at Redruth, says, that they are even worse for mining than for fishing, and that no sensible man would stand the poor chance of living here, when at the diggings you can pick up a fortune before breakfast. Lots of his chaps have started, and Peter Trellyn and I have made up our minds to take the old boat out to Melbourne. Jim and Trellyn's brother Bob are going with us; you come too, and make the fifth hand. I know the

luggar will live in any sea, and she is fast and weatherly enough if you know how to handle her. Bob Trellyn knows the road, he has been twice out and home. We can carry grub and drink enough to last us. I have thought it all over, and I am sure it can be done, and we are off in a week come Monday. I am here on the job now, and go back to-morrow. You can't do much good here, you may do well out there. At any rate, make a fresh start. You are just the chap we want. Five will work the boat better than four, and if you are game, come."

"But the *Magic* is so small. She is not more than sixteen tons."

"It ain't the size of the boat, its the build, as you ought to know. I tell you she is as fit for the voyage as any of your lumbering packets that mess about here for weeks, because they can't sail closer than seven points. Why, Drake, you told us, took a fifteen tonner, *The Christopher* round the world with him, and if that picture was anything like the *Golden Hind*—she, herself, was only a hundred and twenty—why, she would be a fool to the *Magic* in a gale of wind. Columbus's boat was not a hundred tonner, and he said she was too large; and the hardy Norsemen, that Bob sings about, hadn't so big a craft amongst them."

"Well, I don't know. At any rate, the North Sea is not the Atlantic, and—"

"Those chaps didn't stick to the North Sea, and even if they did, it doesn't matter. I am going to take my boat out, soft as you think me, and four other softs are going in her, Jim, Peter Trellyn, Bob,—and you. And now I'll come along to your landlady, and we will square her up, and we can be off together; and if we meet old Twizzlum, I'll take him in hand,

for there is no proof that he didn't bone his note himself!"

And so I was booked. And on the Monday week we five set sail from Mevgerro, in the sixteen-ton lugger, *Magic*, bound for Melbourne. To say that we were looked upon as madmen, is to put the case very mildly indeed. For a time it was hardly thought that we were serious, but when the boat was refitted, and provisioned out of the funds gained by the sale of the gear, and no money borrowed, the neighbours persuaded themselves that the attempt would be made. The majority prophesied failure, talked of having us stopped, &c., &c., but a few believed in us, and wished us well.

We left Mevgerro at dawn on the Monday morning, and the cliffs of purple serpentine, capped with green herbage, and edged against the deep blue sky, with the golden fringe of furze, seemed for a time, as we sailed away from them to come nearer and nearer beneath the slowly brightening light of the rising sun. Clearer and clearer shone the coast, as the grey mist-rolls lifted, and in the full glow of a glorious morning, the pure colour of the heavens, blended with the cloudier tints of the wave-curtain, which, with its ever moving bars of silver foam, slowly rise between us and our native land. The wind was from the north-east, and the *Magic*, under easy sail, bowled along merrily for the Bay of Biscay.

The enterprise was a daring one, but everything had been thought of to make it successful. The lugger had been overhauled, and all the spars, sails, and cordage we had with us were thoroughly tried and proven. We were fully provisioned, and every available inch of room was profitably occupied. Dick was in command, Peter Trellyn was mate, and Bob, who "knew the road," contributed hints on navigation.

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I often think of the good fortune which watched over us.

It was, indeed, a wonder that we did not come to grief before the week was out. Our instruments were a telescope, an old quadrant, a compass, and a chronometer, saved from a wreck, and won in a raffle by the elder Trellyn; our charts were a map of the world of Mercator's projection, with the winds and currents marked, and two star maps picked out of the fourpenny box at a second hand bookstall in Falmouth. Our books were a Bible, an illustrated Cook's Voyages, a geography, and a sailor's directory! Of seamanship there was no lack, but as to navigation! Well, in those days I did not know its importance; had I done so, my mind would not have been quite so much at ease.

We crossed the Bay without mishap, and night after night saw the pole star sinking behind us. The wind varied in force and direction, but never fell to a calm nor rose to a storm, and only six times did it work far enough round for us to beat. We ran into the tropics, and across the line. Only for one short spell of three hours did the lugger make no way. In the South Atlantic we were equally favoured, and chopped along without a check almost as far as Rio, before we made our easting. We sighted many vessels, but spoke none, and the first land we saw was Table Mountain, which we identified by the woodcut in Cook.

We rounded Green Point one Monday morning, and choosing a suitable place, beached the boat, and gave her a good clean down. A coastguard came along the shore as Jim was very busily brushing away underneath her.

"Hallo! Where did you come from?"

"Carnwall, zur!" said he.

"Wheugh! What!!"

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"Carnwall."

"What in that boat?"

"Ay."

"And where are you going to?"

"We are going to the diggings."

"Jeeroosalem! Do you mean to say you are going to Australia in that thing?"

"Ay, we are!"

The man looked the very picture of astonishment, and walked off, muttering to himself that it was the "rummest go" he ever "seed." In about half an hour he returned with an officer, and Dick was then rather sharply cross-examined—a cross-examination with a satisfactory ending.

In Cape Town a great deal of fuss arose about our trip. On comparing dates, it seemed that we had made a very quick passage, and the ships that came in while we were in the bay had all left the Channel before we did. We were invited up to Government House, and as we had beaten the packets out, we were entrusted with a small mail to take on with us to Victoria.

We started full of hope that we should fare as well in the Indian Ocean as we had done in the Atlantic. For the first ten days all went merrily, but on the eleventh the clouds massed, and a storm, the first we had experienced, came down upon us in all its fury. We had the boat all snug and ready just as the opening squall struck us. For a minute the *Magic* heeled and plunged, like a terrified horse, and then she seemed to understand what was required of her, and behaved herself as every good sea-boat will.

For five days the gale continued. The sea was churned up into waves, to which those we had hitherto seen were mere

ripples, and the little lugger, as she rolled and rose to them, threatened every instant to be overwhelmed. The rain every now and then poured down in torrents, and as the *Magic* breasted the billows, so dense was the air, and so vivid the lightning, that her masts seemed to spring into the thunder-clouds. We snatched our food and sleep when we could, or rather, we hardly fed or slept at all. On the sixth day the wind fell, and shifted a point or two, but the weather was still thick, and so it continued for a week, during which we had a roughish sea, and then we had another stiff gale from the south-east, which lasted all day and night.

In these gales we were blown a long way to the northward, as we found, when the fine weather came, which it did in about a fortnight. It lasted only a couple of days, however, and then we had another blow, in which we were much strained and damaged. For a day or so, the weather continued gusty, and unsettled, then we had a beautiful day, and then we were nearly taken unawares by a squall, which, as it swept by in its fury, seemed to level the sea, and beat us down into the flattened waves.

It was wearying work. Storm followed storm, and only by constant watching was the *Magic* kept afloat. The danger of the attempt now came fully home to us, and as the hours rolled by, we expected each to be that, in which we should have to pay with our lives, for our temerity. The boat proved at first a miracle of staunchness, but the ceaseless strains had had their effect, and she began to leak heavily. By hourly pumping and baling we kept her afloat, and made our way eastwards, whenever we got a chance.

But where were we? The sun shone but fitfully, and for weeks we could not catch him at high noon; and the nights

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were so cloudy, that only an occasional star could be seen, and never a group, or combination, which would enable us to identify it.

Dick was ever as cheerful and ready as he had been in his Cornish home.

"If we keep our eyes open, we shall be all right."

"Ay," Peter would reply, "but can we keep them open long enough?"

"Well, it doesn't matter if you can't, so long as you keep her head up," chimed in Bob one day.

"Why?"

"Well, we are only getting blown off our course a bit. If we don't get too far to the south, we shall be all right. The current will look after us as long as we stick to it."

"But, perhaps we have gone too far south?"

"May be, but I don't think so. We shall know when the weather clears. Head her more for the north, and we are bound to strike the Australian coast somewhere."

"Well, its big enough," said Jim, "but somewhere and somehow is a somewhat loose sort of a something. Ain't it Bob?"

The night after this the tempest again swooped down upon us. We had got all stowed and secured, as we thought, to ride it out under close reefed mizen. Just before morning the bumpkin snapped, the boat fell off, and we shipped a heavy sea on the port bow. As it broke over her the *Magic* plunged, seemingly to rise no more. She did rise, however, but the surge had made a clean sweep where it crashed across the deck.

It was a narrow escape. Dick, Bob, and I were pitched overboard. We had lashed ourselves to the gear forward, and

went over with it. Luckily, it did not fall clear. It floated alongside, held by a tangle of rope. Bob was back again first. He was dreadfully bruised, by being dashed against the quarter. Dick's wrist and ankles were much sprained. I was nearly drowned, as I was fast under the boom, but as soon as he got aboard Dick counted heads, and finding me missing, hauled the wreckage closer up, and seized me just as I was sinking.

This was the last of our misfortunes. The storm fell as suddenly as it had risen, the wind shifted a point or two, the day broke fine and misty, and we set to work to repair damages. A clear, starlight night showed us that we were much farther to the north than we had imagined, and so bringing the breeze more abeam, we made a more northerly course. On the morrow we were overtaken by a large barque, and from her we learnt that we were well to the east, and were steering straight for Adelaide. Sheets were eased off in consequence, and we bowled along in the high road, not a day passing without our sighting a ship.

Of the way into Port Phillip we knew very little, Bob confessing that his recollections were very hazy on the subject. However, there was no difficulty—as Dick said.

" We must hang about outside till we see a big 'un, and then follow her in."

This we did, four months and a half after leaving Mevgerro, and came to our anchor without accident or adventure. The news of our voyage had preceded us. The mail had been given up for lost, as we were so long overdue. We were very warmly welcomed, and although it went sore with us to part with her, we had no difficulty in selling our boat. The gold fever was still raging, and many ships were lying

idle for want of sailors, owing to the crews having gone off up country.

Well, we joined the stream, and went up country too. But I never reached the diggings, nor have I been there to this day !

My eyes went bad, and I had the blight. In other ways I was far from well, and one night we went possum hunting in the bush, and I had a fall over a stump, and broke my collar bone. I was taken to the nearest station, which was a couple of miles off the main track, and, as fever had set in and my recovery threatened to be a long business, my companions, assuring themselves that I was in safe hands, left me, and went away north.

The place where I was left was known as Garden Hill, just up the creek ; the station belonged to Murdoch McKye, and the good fairy who nursed me through my illness was his daughter—and my wife.

It was some time before I got round, and then I had a relapse, and it was just as I was recovering from it that Jamie McKye, with whom I had become great chums, was shot by the bushrangers. A man named Desmond arrived one afternoon with the news that Murdoch's old schoolfellow, Cameron, was coming home, in luck, from Ballarat. He was only a day behind, and had asked Desmond to report him. Desmond was a very boisterous, outspoken fellow, and had probably been opening his mouth pretty freely as he came along. If a friend of Desmond's was worth a "pile," he was just the man to advertise the fact.

At the time, a gang of bushrangers, under a certain Dandy John, was in the neighbourhood. This gang consisted entirely of escaped convicts, and like all the bush-thieves, about whom

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so much romance has been talked, were a wretchedly low and brutal lot. I suppose Dandy John got wind of Cameron's coming from one of the keepers of the hotels, where Desmond had been.

McKye looked forward with some pleasure to again meeting his old friend. My bed was set apart for him, and I was shifted for the night into a bunk, which had been made up for me in an outhouse. This outhouse ran off at right angles from the main building, and was lighted by a window-hole about a foot square, which of course had no glass, and which was fitted with a bark shutter.

Not feeling very well, I went to bed early, and as it was a fine moonlight night, I left the shutter open. I slept for some time, and when I awoke, I found that the moon had clouded over, and that it was quite dark. I went to the window-hole to shift the shutter, when I fancied I heard the sound of a horse's leisurely footsteps. It was very faint at first, but at last, it became unmistakeable, and, not knowing the time, I stood and watched, without giving an alarm.

Nearer and nearer came the horse, and then suddenly there was a low whistle, and a rustling and a heavy fall. At the same instant, the moon shot out from behind a cloud, and a few feet from the clearing I saw a horse rearing up, and a man falling to the ground. There were four men round him. One had his grip on the falling horseman, another was at work at the saddle, another was holding the horse, while the fourth was standing in the half-shadow, apparently as guard.

At the noise, which was not so very loud, for the clearing began some distance off, the dogs barked, and I shouted. Young McKye rushed out of the front door, to welcome his

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father's friend, and catching sight of the scene, gave a loud yell of alarm, and ran off to help. He had not gone many yards before there was a shot, and the flash showed that the man in the gloom had fired the gun. It also lighted up the faces of the group under the trees, and that of the man who had fired, I seemed to know as for the first time it was revealed.

In an instant all was astir. The thieves made off with their plunder, leaving Cameron for dead, and his horse adrift. Jamie had rolled over on the grass, and, when his father lifted him, he found the blood trickling from a bullet-hole in his forehead.

Of course the scoundrels got away. We gave information to the police, and after a week or so received a visit from the inspector, who confirmed our depositions, and went carefully over the ground with us. Cameron, though badly hurt by a crack from the butt end of a gun, got all right again after a week or two, and returned to the diggings to make another pile. He had not been gone a couple of days before a sergeant of police came over, and solemnly spent the day in strolling about with a pipe in his mouth. What he discovered I do not know. At any rate he seemed very pleased when he went, for, as he reached the trees, he removed his pipe, and rode off singing "Annie Laurie," punctuating each line with a whiff of tobacco.

I was quite well again, and stronger than I had ever been. The shock of these events had aged me considerably, and I felt that I was, as I was—a full grown man. No tidings had come from the crew of the *Magic*; but this was hardly to be wondered at. Mr. McKye made me an offer to stay with him, but this I declined, and, thinking much of the kindness

of the McKyes, and wondering how I could return it, I was preparing to start up country.

One Monday evening I was strolling home from the creek, when a policeman came in with the news that his inspector was on the track of Dandy John, and that as my evidence of identification might be valuable, I was to stop within call for a day or two. Here, I thought, was a chance of showing my gratitude to the McKyes, and I went back with the policeman. After some demur the inspector allowed me to accompany the party at the finish, and was going to send me on in front with directions where to wait for them, when he pulled up short with :

"Are you game to run a little danger for the sake of making sure of these convicts ? "

"I will do anything to bring the murderer of Jamie McKye to justice."

"Even at the risk of your life ? "

"Yes."

"Well, if you play your part properly you will be safe enough. You know none of this bushranging could go on unless there were sympathisers. Now many of the cooks and shepherds at the outlying stations are old 'lags,' who dare not show their faces in anything of a crowd ; and they are most of them in league with their old mates, who, as they phrase it, 'ain't got no situation.' We have received information that Dandy John, and the few who generally run together with him, are lurking about Moore's Flat, say fifty miles from here, on Blue Creek. We have got the descriptions of these men, and I will give you a copy. You will find they tally with what you know, but we must not make a mistake. What I want you to do is to go on to Moore's, and get an engage-

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in financial matters. The text outlines various methods for organizing and storing data, including digital databases and physical filing systems. It also mentions the need for regular audits and reviews to ensure the integrity of the information.

2. The second section focuses on the role of communication in achieving organizational goals. It highlights the importance of clear and concise communication channels, both internally and externally. The text suggests implementing regular meetings and reports to keep all stakeholders informed and engaged. It also discusses the benefits of open communication, such as improved collaboration and faster problem-solving.

3. The third part of the document addresses the challenges of managing a large and diverse team. It acknowledges that different team members may have varying skills, experiences, and backgrounds, which can lead to communication barriers and conflicts. The text provides strategies for overcoming these challenges, such as providing training and support, fostering a positive team culture, and encouraging open dialogue. It also mentions the importance of setting clear expectations and roles for each team member.

4. The final section discusses the importance of continuous learning and improvement. It emphasizes that organizations should not be satisfied with the status quo and should always be looking for ways to enhance their performance. The text suggests implementing a system of regular feedback and evaluation, as well as providing opportunities for professional development and skill-building. It also mentions the importance of staying up-to-date with industry trends and best practices.



Ben George, London

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ment of some sort in the neighbourhood, and find out if any of the men employed there are those we want. Keep your eyes open, and your tongue still, and come or send to me in Cobb's Gully, where I shall camp to-morrow week."

I was soon on the road, fully equipped for the part I was to play, and with full instructions how to act. On reaching Sandy Hill, I heard that Mr. Phillips, who had the station next to Moore's, was in want of a shepherd, to replace one who was leaving. The inspector had told me about Phillips, in case I ran across him, and, singularly enough, he was the first person I met on making a fresh start. I asked him if he wanted a shepherd, and, after a little conversation, he engaged me to begin work at once, and I went back with him, and he sent me on with a note to the out-station, which I reached all safely. My predecessor had gone, but there was a man in charge of the hut, a very rough customer, who evidently did not think much of me.

One of Moore's men came in at sundown and stayed the night. I turned in early, and, while pretending to be asleep, listened attentively to the talk, which was carried on in whispers. I gathered that the "covies" were rather "down on their luck," were getting anxious, and thought it time to "move on a piece." That one of them had been in Moore's employ at a hut not very far off as cook for a month or so, that another had been taken on temporarily during the last few days, and that the "boss" was still "in camp." I thought this information was pretty good for the first night's work, and in the morning I invited myself down to the hut in company with the man on the pretence that I would like to know the way to my nearest neighbours before I took over in the afternoon. We reached the hut, and found the cook

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baking a damper. He was quite a stranger to me. My companion took himself off after he had had a pannikin of tea, and left me to find my way back alone, but as the damper was nearly done, I thought I would stop and have a bit of it.

As I was waiting, a truculent-looking fellow came in, whom I immediately recognised as the man who had rifled Cameron's saddle. There was a scar on his cheek, and one on his wrist, caused by an endeavour to efface a tattooed anchor, that made him exactly answer the description I had in my pocket of the third man of the gang.

He looked at me very hard, and blustered about a good deal with his pistols, but I seemed quite unconcerned, and led him to think that I looked upon his performances as quite the correct thing in those parts. He was still in the hut when I left about one o'clock, and started back.

My companion left me in the morning, promising to return in a couple of days, and I was alone. He came back to his time, however; and that evening the dogs gave an alarm. Going out to see what was the matter, he returned with a dilapidated-looking digger, who had "lost his way." This digger had not been with us a couple of minutes before I felt sure I knew him, but who he was I could not remember. It soon dawned on me that it was the "Annie Laurie" sergeant, but I, of course, refrained from recognising him, as he did not show that he knew me.

After we had made ourselves comfortable for the night, the serjeant lay down beside me by the fire, and when all was quiet, he asked me in a whisper what I had been doing. I told him what I had heard and seen, and then cautioning me to get round to the party as soon after day-break as I could manage, he went out. I was off in the morning early, and

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joined the inspector, according to programme. He had five men with him, besides the serjeant, and a "black tracker," and, immediately started for the other hut, making a long sweep round, and keeping under cover as much as possible.

We reached the hut without alarm, and then the inspector walking up to one of its blind sides, sidled along it to the front, and slipping open the door, collared the only inhabitant just as he was putting a leg of mutton on to boil. Having gagged and silenced him, a few holes were made in the hut; the men were placed inside, so that no one could approach without being seen, and strict silence was enjoined, which was only broken by the bubbling of the pot that held the leg of mutton.

It seemed a long wait, but as the inspector whispered to me—

"There's a good time coming, boys, wait a little longer. Somebody will turn up for the grub. Wish he'd come though; I am rather hungry, are not you?"

Just as I was beginning to think that the mutton would be done to death, the serjeant gave a short "ist," and we saw coming up to the hut, the man with the scars, and with him the fellow who had held Cameron's horse. The inspector walked on tip-toe to the door. Soon we could hear the foot-steps. The latch moved. The instant it cleared the catch, the inspector swung the door back, and before the man could move hand or foot, he was thrown on one side, and collared, when the serjeant dashed out, knocked up a pistol that the scarred man had drawn, and, helped by two of the police, had the handcuffs on in no time.

After the prisoners had been charged with being so-and-so, and so-and-so, according to the descriptions, and were

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properly secured for travelling, the inspector ordered dinner to be served, and we made a hurried but hearty meal, though the looks of those for whom the joint was originally intended were not much calculated to improve our appetites.

The black tracker was then told off to lead the party to where the rest of the gang were encamped. The native did not seem to care very much about the job. At any rate, he did not take us along very fast, and very often there was nothing apparent to account for the obviously roundabout route that he followed. The bush was very thick, the track could only be noticed here and there, and on such a cloudy day it was a marvel to me how we found our way at all. However, I suppose the tracker knew what he was about.

About dusk we got into more open country, and reached a narrow stretch of swamp, beyond which we understood that the men we were after had pitched their tent. This swamp we skirted, and as we turned to advance along the opposite side the party divided. The three prisoners were left behind under guard, and the inspector and the rest of his men stealthily moved up to the camp.

The progress was very slow. The night breeze was blowing in our faces; not a word was spoken; every dry twig we could see was avoided, and hardly one was trod on or snapped as we crept from tree to tree. We first saw the camp fire when we were about a hundred yards away from it. In front of a dirty tarpaulin rigged up as a tent were two men. The oldest and strongest looking was lighting his pipe; the other had his back towards us, and was cooking something in a frying pan over the flames. The big man was Dandy John, the slighter figure was that of the man who had shot Jamie McKye.

A policeman glided off to each side so as to command the

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camp with their carbines, and shoot the bushrangers if they attempted to escape. Behind the fire was a hillock with a few trees; behind the hillock was the flat leading down to the swamp; so that a run for life in that direction would have to be risked in the open.

The inspector and his men laid down at full length and crawled to the back of the tent. Dandy John seemed to hear some sound other than that of the sputtering of the frying pan, and reaching down for his pistol, looked round among the trees. As he moved the police were upon him, and he was seized. At the same moment the other man dropped the pan into the fire, and sprang towards the tree behind which I was hid. I shouldered him as he passed, and sent him staggering to the ground. In two seconds the sergeant had him handcuffed, and was dragging him back into the glare. The fire was blazing furiously, and as the prisoner rolled over towards it, I, for the first time, noticed his face.

It was Stephen Morton!

I was so astounded that I said not a word, and at once moved out of his sight. The party was soon re-united, and we camped round the fire. Just as we were getting ready to sleep I beckoned the inspector aside, and told him what I knew. He, of course, took quite a professional view of matters.

"Claim his acquaintance, and pump him; we may find out something. Its awkward. He fired the shot, or we might have got him off. He had not been long with these chaps, I know. Wonder how he came to join them!"

I did not care to say anything to Steve, and in the morning we started home, calling by the way on Mr. Phillips, to whom the inspector explained matters about my engagement, and

obtained my release. At the trial I was called as a witness, and then the fact of my having known Steve in England came out. Before he was hanged he wrote me a letter, and told me how on the day of his dismissal he had gone out with the intention of paying in the cheque, but had met a friend just outside, with whom he stood chatting for a few minutes. As he parted with him he remembered that he had promised to return a book to one of his acquaintances, and had come into the office before going on to the bank. What happened you know, and it seems that when he went to clear his desk he found the slip-book and cheque in his side pocket, and giving way to the sudden temptation to injure those he had quarrelled with, and to help himself at the same time, he tore out the slip, and forged the scrawly initial on the counterfoil, intending, however, to refund the money from the stream of wealth that would flow to him at the diggings. On board the *Mandolier* he got into bad company, and when he landed he continued their acquaintance, and, taking to gambling, he found himself penniless on the road, and, instead of turning to hard, steady work, had sunk, step by step, until he had joined the convict gang. The night of the murder had been the first he had spent with them, and they had, of course, given him the place in which he was most likely to commit himself. He said nothing about the ten pounds, so that that still remained a mystery.

I returned to Garden Hill, and after I had told my story, began to talk of going north in search of the unheard-of "Magicians," as we called ourselves, but Mr. McKye pulled me up very short, and sent me out to look at the new bullock yoke. The next day he kept me fully employed, but in the evening, after he had been "giving himself airs on the fiddle,"

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as he called it, and we were left alone for a few minutes, I again broached the subject.

"Nae, nae, laddie," said he, giving me one of his shrewdest looks, "tak an auld mon's counsel," and putting his fiddle up to his shoulder, he gently sang to it, as he played, "Ye'd better bide a wee!" I urged my promise to Dick to join him as soon as possible.

"Ye think they're gude friends to ye still, or ye wodna care to join them, but if they're gude friends they'll think more of ye. noo for biding wi' Murdoch McKye."

"Do you think they are not doing well, then?"

"I dinna ken. But if they are, they don't want ye, and if they are not, ye can help them best when ye're in the best position to do so. Stay here; if ye are steady, ye can take Jamie's place. We canna pick up nuggets in this line, but we can grow them. Ye mayn't gae up squoosh, like a rocket, but ye won't come down like the stick! Bide a wee, laddie, bide a wee! I've taken a fancy to ye, and so has——"

But here Mary came into the room, and old McKye jerked his head down on to the fiddle, and screwing up his eyes till they were nearly closed, dashed off furiously with the "Aut the wind can blaw," running it off at the end into "Th' gang nae man to yon town!"

Two days after, while I was still debating what to do, I received a letter from Dick, "sent on spec," stating that they were all well, but that the "only gold in the hole as yet is what we have put down it," and expressing his determination to go into store-keeping, or something of the sort if matters did not soon mend. This decided me, and by return, Dick received a letter, stating that I had "engaged" with Murdoch McKye.

Two months afterwards I "engaged " with Mary. I regret to say that we came to our little understanding very early in the day, in fact before breakfast. As we strolled in to the house together, I said—

" Well, I'll tell your father at once ; I wonder whether he'll mind."

" Not in the least ! " replied the old man, who, unknown to us, had just reached the door. " But ye might have asked him first."

But although Murdoch had no objection to our marriage, he was in no hurry for it, and enjoined on us, during breakfast, the advantages of his perennial " bide a wee."

After breakfast there was a letter to me from Dick that he and Peter were "shunting" to Lubarlong, and that Bob had gone off Wallaroo way under the guidance of Jim, who had persuaded them that "copper was more precious than gold."

"And sae it is," quoth McKye, "if ye've only enough of it."

"Mind your eye!" continued Dick, "there is an advertisement on the scrap of newspaper I enclose, which is intended for it. It is lucky for you that, with that keen sense of economy which distinguishes old Isaacs, he wrapped up Peter's last screw of tobacco with a corner off a customer's paper."

"Should this meet the eye," the advertisement began, and it stated that by sending my present address to Treweath & Co., I should hear of something to my advantage.

"Clearing up the ten pounds," I thought, and I wrote to Falmouth.

A week after my engagement to Mary I found the ford at the end of the lower road, and noticing the sharp rise of the ground through which the creek cuts just above it, I saw that

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if ever a bridge came hereabouts it would be there. People began to talk of Lubarlong, and those first bound for it from the south struck off across country after passing the old ford. But here we got a straight road and a level one, and so I persuaded McKye to take up this bit of land, which then was thought worthless; the rest you know. As soon as we had the land safe, we let out the secret of the ford, and did all we could to get the traffic along this road. The traffic did come, the gold rush to Lubarlong was bigger than any; planted just at the critical point, with the land all round in our possession, we could not help making money rapidly.

One day, to my unbounded delight, in walked Dick and Peter! They came from the old road.

"Made your fortunes at Lubarlong?"

"No," said Dick, "never got there! When we went down our claim, to have a last look round, I gave a farewell kick of contempt at the side, and down tumbled a heavy lump of stuff about the size of a potatoe. Peter picked it up, and it was a nugget—our first! We made no fuss, but set to work like fun, and found a dozen, little and big, just an inch below where we had intended to leave the pound. We turned to for another couple of hours, and then I said to Peter, 'I don't believe there's any more taters. Let us turn them into coin, and open a store somewhere. The claim is a good selling property now, and we can clear out in style, down to Kit.' And Peter agreed with me! And here we are; and the company that bought the claim hasn't found anything else in it yet, as far as we know."

And they never did; at least, they never said so.

Well, my two old friends went into partnership in the store close by. Their names together are still up over the front,

" CHRISTOPHER KAYRN : " OR

and their names, separately,—Ah, me!—are now over their coffins in the graveyard.

However, I must finish my yarn. Things prospered amazingly, and eight months after our engagement Mary and I were married. When we reached home, we found a letter for me from England. It was from my old employers, and ran as follows :—

" DEAR SIR,

" The ten-pound note which I too hastily assumed you had taken was found a week after your departure at the back of the drawer immediately below that in which I had left it, it having, evidently, slipped out over the edge and down the casing. I trust you will appreciate the position I was in, owing to the events of the day, and accept my apology for the wrong I did you. The enclosed draft for one hundred pounds, which I send as a sign of our good will and good wishes, may not be altogether unacceptable, even if you are on the high-way to wealth, as I trust that all the crew of the *Magic* now are.

" Yours obediently,

" DAVID TREWEATH."

" So old Twizzlum did bone it himself," said Dick. " But what a fine old fellow he is to write and say so. When you send back, give him the compliments of the Captain of the *Magic*, and ask him if he'd like to invoice goods direct to Webb and Trellyn."

Old Mr. McKye was, if anything, more rejoiced at the news than any of us. Why, perhaps, can be guessed. He read the letter over twice, and then gave it to his daughter, and then taking her hand and mine in his, he said :

" Ye've been no disgrace to the old folks as boy and girl,

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may ye be none as man and woman. Kit, your wife is very fond of ye, may ye always be worthy of her true-hearted love. I have no fear that ye'll not be so, for ye've been through the fire and proved right. A better chance than yours very few have had in this world. Ye've only got to work to win. Ye've done naething of which ye need be ashamed, and—Mary, none can say he's not an honest man !”





Jem Patch's Threat.

GENERAL Sir Thomas Ruddleston was coming to spend Christmas with us, and we were all somewhat excited at Chepstow Lodge. For ours was in ordinary a quiet uneventful life in a quiet country village, our neighbours, for the most part gentlemen farmers like ourselves, whose fame as breeders of cattle or growers of giant turnips had never spread beyond the limits of their own county, whereas Sir Thomas was known and honoured wherever the English language was spoken ; had led his country's armies to victory in many a hard-fought field ; had been her chosen representative wherever political sagacity and courageous self-reliance were most required ; and as soldier or statesman had equally won renown.

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We had heard much of Sir Thomas from his sister, who had been an early friend of my mother's, and who usually passed Christmas with us. She was never tired of recounting incidents of her brother's bravery, and stories of his hair-breadth escapes. She had collected a whole portfolio of newspaper cuttings reporting the actions in which he had played a conspicuous part; the "forlorn hopes" of which he had been the leader; the troublous times in India, when his decision and daring quelled an insurrection and saved a province; how he gained his Victoria Cross; and the many ways in which his country and his Sovereign had done him honour.

And this great man was really to be with us for days together. We should see him, hear him, perhaps—though the notion seemed at first almost too audacious—even touch him.

"Perhaps," said Gussie, my sister, aged thirteen, and oh, ever so much younger than I—for I was fifteen—"he might, himself, tell us a tale of his adventures."

I pooh-poohed this notion at first, but the more we thought of it the more attractive it became, and after many conversations on the subject, we agreed that "Baby," our little sister, aged seven, whose blue eyes and fair hair we had always found irresistible advocates on our behalf whenever we wished some especial boon from our indulgent parents, we agreed then, I say, that "Baby" should, as of her own sudden impulse, and without any prompting or suggestion on our part, at the first favorable opportunity, ask Sir Thomas to tell us that greatest of all delights to the healthily-constituted youthful mind—a true story.

The 21st of December arrived, and with it Sir Thomas

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Ruddleston. I shall never forget how disappointed I was when I saw him first. My father had asked him to let us know the day and train by which he purposed arriving, that we might send the carriage to the station, seven miles distant, to meet him. Sir Thomas had replied that he was anxious to see his sister as soon as possible, but could not tell exactly how long his business at the War Office (he had just returned from India) might detain him. He finished his business the next afternoon, arrived at the station the same night, slept at the Railway Hotel, and drove up in a fly by eight o'clock the next morning. All the household were in bed except the servants and myself, and I had gone for an hour's skating before breakfast to a large pond about a mile from the house.

I was on my way home when I overtook on the road an elderly plainly-dressed gentleman, standing looking over the hedge, with his hands behind his back. I saw that he was a stranger, but I knew our neighbour, Squire Cremer, had a shooting party down for the holidays, and I took it for granted this was one of his guests.

He hailed me as I passed.

"I've no doubt," he said, addressing me quite familiarly, "you know everything about these fellows," pointing to a flock of sheep in the adjoining field, "and can tell me what I am vainly puzzling myself to recollect. Are these Southdowns or Leicesters?"

"Leicesters," I said, with, I fear, a half smile, at his ignorance. "Southdowns are"—

"A very different kind altogether. I know they are. I know the one are round, plump little fellows, and the others this larger kind, but I can never recollect at the right moment which are the little plump ones, and which the larger animals.

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I don't think I shall ever remember the distinction for twelve months together. Of course, if I were to take to farming, and keep the sheep, I should be able to distinguish them ; but I mean if I were to go away for twelve months, and come back, and see those sheep grazing there, I should still be as dubious as I was just now as to whether they were Southdowns or Leicesters. Let's see, Leicesters I think you said? Yes, Leicesters," he repeated, complacently, apparently quite pleased to think he was right so far. " Then there's mangel-wurzels and Swede turnips, again. I could never be sure of the distinction between those ; and I've sometimes complimented a man on his Swedes when it ought to have been on his mangels, and on his mangels when it ought to have been on his Swedes, and felt that my stupid blunder had taken all the value out of my compliment. It doesn't seem much to be proud of," went on the old gentleman, reflectively, " growing bigger turnips than your neighbours ; and yet, I suppose, looked at in the proper light, it belongs to the most useful, and so the most noble kind of work a man can do. Don't you think so ? " he said, flashing round a quick glance at me.

If I had said what I thought, I should have said he was talking a great deal of twaddle, so I said nothing, but bowed what he might take for assent.

" I see you've been skating," he resumed, as we walked along together. " I never had the chance of practicing skating when I was young, there was so little water in our part of the country, and I never had the courage to attempt it when I grew older, if, indeed, I had had the time. I think of all the deplorable figures a man cuts, there is none more ridiculous than when a friend, who has led him on to the ice

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in his skates, leaves him to flounder, struggle, and sprawl, a laughing stock to all beholders. And yet," after a pause, "it is a graceful accomplishment when acquired, and ridicule itself ought to be braved and overcome, like nearly everything else that is hard and repugnant to us."

I felt that I had had enough of this prosy old stranger, and was not sorry to find that we had arrived at our lodge gate.

"That," I said, pointing across the road, "is the way to Mr. Cremer's; this is Mr. Fraser's."

"Yes," he said, opening the gate; "I am going to Mr. Fraser's. I drove in from Molton before they were up this morning, so I took an hour's walk in preference to disturbing them."

"Have you," I said, my heart sinking at the thought that perhaps something had happened to my hero, and that he might not be coming, after all—"Have you come from Sir Thomas Ruddleston?"

"I am Sir Thomas Ruddleston," quietly responded the unknown.

I never felt so foolish in my life. I do not know exactly what idea I had formed of the General's appearance, or how he would first come among us. I certainly did not expect he would come in uniform, or at the head of an army; or with drums beating, flags flying, or trumpets sounding; but any of these adjuncts would, I think, have surprised me less than finding my hero, a simple-seeming man, whose conversation was of turnips and Southdowns, and who had never learned to skate, because he was afraid of a fall. My father and mother were in the hall, awaiting their guest. Miss Ruddleston, all tears and smiles, flew past them into her brother's arms. He was little less affected than she was.

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"You must excuse us, madam," he said to my mother, openly wiping his eyes; "it is a very long time since we have met—six years, Nellie."

And again they embraced.

He a hero! I felt he was a fraud, and although I said nothing of my suspicions, I believe I cherished a secret hope that before the day was over someone, somewhat resembling my favorite heroes in "*Ivanhoe*," would ride up on a fiery steed, and proclaim, in ringing tones—"That is an imposter—I am Sir Thomas Ruddleston!"

But no such arrival took place, and my feeling of disappointment wore off as our guest made himself more and more at home with us. Each morning's mail brought him a mass of correspondence, and each morning he spent exactly two hours in the library, reading and writing. It was tacitly understood that during this time he should be absolutely undisturbed, and at its expiration he would reappear as tranquil and unruffled as if all his life were spent in trifling. He appeared to take an interest and find a pleasure in everything; he was an entertaining speaker, and an exemplary listener. His quiet courtesy was as marked to the humblest servant as to the lady of the house. An indefinable something in him appeared to gain the confidence and respect of every one with whom he came in contact.

He seldom or ever spoke of himself, and told us none of those "moving incidents, by flood and field," with which we had hoped to be regaled. He told us much of what he had seen, nothing of what he had done. That bad "Baby," instead of asking him to tell a story of his adventures, preferred, like many of her seniors, to hear herself prattle, and found in Sir Thomas a patient and pleased listener. The

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little traitress, it is true, got him to tell her many tales, but then they were of the dolls of all nations, and the children of all climes—their training, their trinkets, their pastimes, and other kindred subjects, adapted to the taste and understanding of the blue-eyed listener on his knee.

So the time wore on, and the period of Sir Thomas's visit drew to a close. A night or two before his departure we were all seated round the fire. "Baby," who had pleaded to remain up late, was with us. The General had been describing a tiger hunt in the jungle, and had vividly brought before us its every incident—the meet in the forest, the docile monster elephants, the dusky beaters, the pursuit, the ferocious beast at bay, and the baffled viciousness of its dying spring.

At the close of the General's narrative, Baby broke in :—

"When you were in India did you wear long sword?"

"Yes, Baby; sometimes."

"And did you kill man with it?"

"Yes, Baby," very seriously, "I've had to do that."

'Baby,' as if the doing that was of no consequence. "Will you tell Bertie and Gussy about it?"

"I think not, little one; those are not pleasant things to speak of. But I will tell you of a wonderful performance I saw given by an Indian juggler before the King of Oude, on the birthday of a little Princess, who was about your age."

'Baby,' pertinaciously, and in utter oblivion of her faithful promise to us that our names should not be mentioned.

"But Bertie and Gussie want you to tell them what you did when you went to kill man, and man went to kill you; they say its nicer than what you told me about the silver foxes in Kanda."

The General bent a look of humour and inquiry upon me. I felt my face flush up, but I spoke out, nevertheless—

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"Miss Ruddleston has spoken so much of you, sir, and told us so many wonderful and daring things you have done, and the dangers you have been in, that we did hope you would have told us some of them yourself—just one, sir," I said, gaining confidence, and increasing in earnestness as I went on, "the biggest you know, or that you thought the most of." "Do please, Sir Thomas," said my mother. "Come, Tom," said Miss Ruddleston, coaxingly; and in deference to a general chorus of "Do, please," the General smiled, bowed his head, and began his story:—

"I will tell you, then, one of my earliest adventures—one, the effects of which made a stronger impression upon me than any of the much greater perils through which it has been my lot to pass.

It was Christmas time, I was eleven years old, and home for the holidays. My father, at the time, was very ill, and very irritable, could tolerate no noise or excitement, and would scarcely suffer my mother to leave his room for an instant. You, Nellie, remained at your school, but it was the end of my first term, and I was so homesick, and pleaded so hard to be allowed to come and see my parents (from whom I had never before been separated,) that they allowed me to return for at least a part of my vacation.

It was very dreary there, at Western Park, in the wilds of Hampshire. I had no companions, no amusements; my father's illness and my mother's anxiety made me very unhappy, and for the first two or three days I almost wished myself back at Lindley Murray House. At length a gleam of light broke through my gloom.

There was still a gamekeeper upon the estate, although his office was almost a sinecure, for it was many years since game

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had been preserved at Western Park. He and his wife, who had been dairymaid, were old retainers of the family, and were both very kind and attached to me. In one of my visits to their neat little cottage, among the few old volumes of sermons, tract magazines, and farmers' calendars, which formed their library, I happened on a most incongruous work, y'clept 'The Arabian Nights Entertainments.' I opened it, and was spell-bound! It was my first introduction into the region of romance; my first flight into the realms of imagination.

I knew that Joe Danvers and his wife were going next day to the market town, about four miles distant, and would be absent some hours. I prevailed upon them to promise to leave me alone with the precious volume, to feed on undisturbed during their absence. I told my mother I wished to spend the afternoon at their cottage, but did not, I fear, go further into details. She was pleased that I had thought of something I should like to do, and gladly gave me the permission I desired.

I went over betimes the next morning, and found Mrs. Danvers had made provision for my reception, by putting out of the way anything that suggested to her the probability of my doing myself any mischief; all the keepers' guns, and other weapons, his traps, even the table knives, I found had been removed to an inner room, and locked up. The good old woman had great fears as to leaving me alone with the fire, but that, alas, was unavoidable, and after many cautions not to go too near it, and, above all, not to fall asleep into it, the worthy couple, a veritable Darby and Joan, started off for the market town, assuring me they would be back soon after four o'clock. It was then twelve.

They took, at my request, the key of the door with them,

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and I was left locked in alone with my precious volume. There was a jug of milk, richly crowned with cream, on the table, and some delicately browned flat cakes, redolent of sugar and carraway seeds, which I knew from experience to be as delicious to the taste as attractive to the eye. But I had no stomach for such viands as these. What I hungered for was the delectable repast prepared by the fair Scheherazade for the Sultan Schahriar.

I had read for, I suppose, not more than an hour, but long enough to make me forget the whole actual world around me, and to be thoroughly possessed with a belief in the existence of benevolent genii, and malevolent gins, of spiteful magicians, and beneficent fairies.

I had read so much, and so rapidly, that I felt I was getting a little mixed, so took my eyes off my book for a little while, to think of what I had been reading. I thought of Prince Ahmed, and his luck in getting such a beautiful and clever being as the Fairy Pari Banou for his spouse, and I thought if I ever had the luck to get such a wife with ability to grant my requests, say any three of my wishes, how I should invest my capital of power. Then I thought, with amusement, of poor Bedreddin, condemned to death for not putting pepper in the cream tart, and of the happy termination of all his troubles; perhaps all my troubles, and, foolish boy that I was, I thought I had a great many, would also end happily.

The thought of the cream tart brought to my mind the refreshments that had been prepared for me. I went to the little table in the corner where the cakes and milk were set out, and was about helping myself to them, when the casement window was forced open, and a man, drawing himself up from the outside by his hands, wriggled in head foremost.

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I thought he would never be done coming in, there was so much of him. I thought of the Genii who evolved himself out of the smoke, and I wondered whether he looked more hideous or formidable than the unprepossessing giant who now stood up before me. I did not feel afraid (for I had read myself into an unreal visionary condition) even if this should prove to be a wicked sorcerer, I had no doubt there was a good fairy ready to appear at the proper season.

I repeated to myself the words of Prince Ahmed when cautioned against the magician: "As I do not remember I ever did, or designed to do, anybody an injury, I cannot believe anybody can have a thought of doing me one."

When the intruder turned round and saw me standing there, I think he was more frightened than I.

"Is your father out?" he said; and seeing that I hesitated in replying to this unexpected question, he went on, "No lies, you beggar, I know he is, I saw them lock the door, and followed them for a couple of miles. Now then, the truth, mind you; when are they coming back?"

"By four o'clock, or a quarter past, at latest," I replied, quoting Mrs. Danvers' words at parting.

"Four o'clock, and it's now ten minutes past one?" said my interrogator, looking up at the little Dutch clock in the corner, which went on ticking away as if nothing were the matter. "Four o'clock? Well, sit down over there and I'll think what's to be done with you. No; not near the window. None of your larks with me, sir, or I'll break your precious little neck at once, I will. Now then, first of all, where does your father keep his money?"

"I don't know," said I.

"Now, no nonsense, I warn you. Is it in here, or over

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there? I shall soon find out, I warrant you, whether you tell me or not."

"John Danvers is not my father," I said, a light breaking in upon me, "and I don't know where he keeps his money; if I did I wouldn't tell you," I added.

"What are you doing here then if he's not your father? and who is your father, you cheeky little scamp?"

"I came here to read," said I; "and my father is Sir James Ruddleston, of Western Park, Baronet," I added, thinking it sounded more imposing.

He got up and walked over to me.

"Say that again."

"Sir James Ruddleston, of Western Park, Baronet," I repeated.

"And you're not lying, so help you?"

"I never lie," I said, scornfully.

He turned me round with his finger and thumb, lifting me up with the same action, then he sat down and glared at me.

"Sir James Ruddleston, Baronite, is it?" he said.

"Yes," I answered.

"And is your name Sir James?"

"No," I said; "my name is Thomas."

"Are there many of you?" he asked; "many young baronites? I mean supposing one was to die."

"I am the only son," I said.

"And there aint ne'er another to take your place?"

"No," I said, with some satisfaction, for I felt that it enhanced my importance; "I am the only son."

"Lor! think of that now," he said; and he leant his elbows on the table, and his head upon his hands, and laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks.

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Whilst he was thus engaged I had a good look at him. He was a young man not more, I should think, than five or six and twenty, and one of the most powerful I ever looked upon. He was considerably over six feet in height. His teeth were very white; his hair thick, black, and untidy; his features were disfigured by what appeared the results of a recent fight; and a long blue weal across his face had swollen up and added a more ferocious expression to a face naturally unprepossessing.

He seemed in a very good humour now, for he continued to laugh heartily.

"Baronite," said he, at length, "hand over that toke."

As he pointed to the table where stood the cakes and milk, I guessed what he meant, and passed them over to him, first taking a sip myself out of the jug, for I was thirsty, and my tongue was inclined to cling to the roof of my mouth.

"Baronite," he said, looking at me reproachfully, "don't they teach you no better manners than that? Baronite, I'm ashamed of you."

He devoured the cakes in a very short time, and pronounced them good.

"They was for you, I suppose, Baronite?" he said.

I nodded assent.

"And you aint had none?"

I assented to his meaning.

He rubbed his hands gleefully together, and appeared better humoured than ever; the more jovial he became, the more hideous he looked, and the less I fancied him. His restless eyes rolling around the room caught sight of some shoe brushes in a corner under the sink.

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"Baronite," he said, pointing to them, "clean my boots."

At first I thought of telling him I wouldn't, then I remembered what I had heard of fagging at school. I should have to do it there, or get a hiding. Here it was only much the same; besides, it would give time for the good fairy to arrive, and it occurred to me she must now be very nearly due. So I fetched out the brushes and the blacking, and a strong sharp-pointed stump of an old carving knife to scrape off the mud, and I knelt down, and I cleaned, and blacked, and polished his misshapen clouted shoon until they shone like patent leather.

"Bravo, Baronite!" he cried, as I was getting up at the completion of my task; "Bravo, Baronite!" at the same time administering a hearty kick, which sent me rolling behind him.

Whilst out of his sight for the moment I slipped the stumpy knife into my jacket pocket.

I took the brushes back to their place, and began to wash my hands.

"Come here," said he.

"I'm washing my hands," said I,

"Come here when I tell you," he repeated.

I continued to wash, and had just finished, when he strode across the room, and again seizing me by the nape of the neck with his finger and thumb, pitched me with considerable force into the corner of the fire-place farthest from the window, and sat down opposite to me.

He put his hands in his trousers pockets, stretched out his legs before him, and regarded his feet complacently.

"You'd make a very good shoe-black, Baronite, if your life was spared. I wish I could think of some other little job for

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you to do before we part. You washed your hands after all," he went on ; " let's look at them."

I held one out, it was my left ; he took it in his great horny paw, squeezed it until flesh, bones, and sinew seemed one mass of jelly, and then let it drop.

The pain was excruciating ; the tears forced themselves to my eyes, but I did not utter a cry.

" Did you like that ?"

" No," I said.

" Would you like another ?"

" No," I replied again.

He eyed me all over, looking more like an ogre than ever. His silent stare was worse than anything.

" Got any money ?" he said, at length.

" No," I answered.

" I can tell you how you could get some," he went on.

Was it possible that he could be a good Genii after all ? No ; I couldn't think it was.

" You've only got to go to some constable or magistrate, or some man big enough to hold me, and tell 'em I'm Jem Patch, him as there's fifty pounds reward offered for, fifty pounds and a free pardon to anyone as'll give him up. Wouldn't you like to have it ? Ha ! ha ! You'll have to get out first though."

" First time I had my shoes cleaned by a baronite," he went on ; " first time I ever shook hands with one ; not but I've met 'em, bless you. It was a baronite as gave me my first three months on the mill ; it was a baronite as gave me this cut under the eye, because I took a half empty wine bottle out of his carriage at the races last week ; it was a baronite judge as sentenced my father to be hanged ; and a parson baronite who put my mother in Chester Jail, where she died, for telling his

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servants their fortunes. I loves them all, I do, I loves them all; and I love you, too, my young shaver, as I'll show you. Why didn't you see to the fire, you varmint; stir it up at once, and make it blaze like Tophet."

I'm not sure that that was the word he used, but it was to the same effect.

I did as I was bid, I stirred the fire, and I left the poker in it.

When I had completed my task he chucked me roughly under the chin, so that I should hold my head up.

"Father kind to you?" he said.

"Yes," I said. So he had been always; my heart sank as I thought how kind in the days before his illness. Would that good fairy never come?

"And your mother, eh? Ah! she's a good one, I warrant now. Thinks a lot of you, don't she? I thought so. Now is she one of them sort of baronites, you know, or anything of that kind?

"My mother," I said, quoting proudly a remembered passage from the Peerage, "was Ellen, third daughter of the Honourable George Bulbul, of Nightingale Park, Wiltshire, and sister of the first Earl of Kindlecum."

He rubbed his hands and clapped his knees with delight.

"She wouldn't like to lose you now, would she?" he said, insinuatingly. She'd take on a lot, I dare say, if you was to die."

"I think she'd break her heart," I said. The recollection of all her love and tenderness flooded my soul, and overflowed in tears.

"Then she'll soon break it," cried my tormentor in a loud, savage tone, different from any he had hitherto assumed; "for

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Sir James Thomas Ruddleston, of Western Park, Baronite, son of the third daughter of the Honourable What's-his-name, and sister of the Earl of Biddlecome, there aint a red herring in the seaport town of Yarmouth deader than you'll be in half an hour."

"I wish you was a little bigger," he went on in a half reproachful tone to me; "but you're the best I can get. I swore whenever I got one of you in my power I'd murder him; but lor! I never thought I should get one so early as this. You seem a pretty plucked one, and if you keep quiet I'll do it as smooth and clean as I can; if you give me any trouble, so much the worse for you. I wouldn't have minded giving you half an hour to reconcile yourself to it, but there's your carcase to dispose of, so that it mayn't be found until I get clean off. It's half-past two now, and those people will be back at four; one never knows what may happen, and it's better to lose no time; I'll just get a bit of rope, and hang you like my father was hung, it'll soon be over, and it's no use you're making any fuss about it."

I made no fuss; I wondered to myself where he would get the rope, and I hoped he would not think of the towel hanging behind the closet door, which I thought might very easily be made available for the purpose of strangling me. But he had another resource.

There was a rope swing in the garden, which Danvers had put up for a little niece who sometimes visited them. Jem Patch's quick eye had noticed this as he came in, and believed it to be within reach of the window. So it was, but it necessitated his leaning half of his body out of the casement in this way. He had just got hold of it, and still the friendly fairy had not yet come to my assistance. But the poker which

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I had left in the fire was by this time at a white heat, and seizing it with both my hands, I pressed it with all my strength broadside on, as—ahem!—I had seen the clown do in a pantomime, and Jem Patch cleared that window in a style that would have done credit to any harlequin.

Mad with rage and pain he was up and at me in an instant. The outside of the window was about seven or eight feet from the ground, and, whilst the poker continued hot, I had little difficulty in keeping him back, by burning his hands each time they clasped the window-sill.

During all this time he kept muttering, in a low, fierce, monotonous growl, which chilled my blood, and ran in my ears for many a long day afterwards—"I'll murder you! I'll murder you! No matter how long I wait, I'll murder you!"

At last, in spite of all my efforts, he made good his ascent to the window-sill. I struck at him, but he wrenched the poker from my feeble hold, and made a savage blow at me, which I barely escaped, by cowering down under the window. He leaned over, and grasped me by the chest, but at that instant I struck him under the arm with the strong pointed knife I had until now kept in my pocket. He released his hold, and I heard him fall heavily to the ground. I heard again, too, although in fainter accents—"I'll murder you! I'll murder you! No matter how long I wait, I'll murder you!"

I stayed for some minutes huddled up in the same position, expecting each moment a renewal of the attack, and as the silence continued, growing equally fearful of the consequences of my own act. At length I summoned up courage to fetch a chair and look out of the window. He was gone; there was a little pool of blood where he had fallen, but no other sign of my assailant. So I closed the window, and, first putting the

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poker in the fire, that I might have it ready in the event of again requiring it, sat down to recover myself, and think over the terrible ordeal through which I had passed.

That horrible, monotonous chant, "I'll murder you! I'll murder you! No matter how long I wait, I'll murder you!" still rang in my ears, and filled me with apprehension. My mother! I thought, if my mother knew it, she would go mad with fear and anxiety on my behalf. No! She must not know it, and to prevent it coming to her knowledge, it must be kept a secret from everyone else.

So I wiped off with my handkerchief some blood that stained the knife, and a streak that remained on the window ledge. I trusted the pool outside might not be seen, and, indeed, a heavy rain fell that night, and removed all trace of it.

When, shortly after four o'clock, John Danvers and his wife came home, they found me sitting where they had left me, looking, they said, rather pale and tired. Mrs. Danvers was quite pleased to find all her cakes gone. She said it was evident the old place did me good; I had such an appetite." This was the unkindest cut of all.

But when I got home, my mother said I looked feverish and ill, as, indeed, I was; for nights together I could not sleep, and for many a night and day there continually recurred to my imagination that oft-repeated threat, "I'll murder you! I'll murder you! No matter how long I wait, I'll murder you!"

More than twenty years had passed. I had chosen the army as a career, had been fortunate in seeing much service, and had gained promotion at least equal to my deserts. I believe I had acquired a reputation for bravery; and, indeed, I had never been in the habit of shirking from danger. But through all these years I had never quite recovered from the



Mad with rage and pain he was up and at me in an instant.—Page 85.

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shock of that encounter in my boyhood, or ceased to be haunted by the possibility that at that present instant my footsteps were being dogged, with a view to my assassination. I had never seen or heard anything more of Jem Patch, but I had a secret, though unaccountable conviction, that he still lived, and that we should again meet.

It was, I think, in 1852, that I was sent out to Melbourne to direct measures for the dispersion of several gangs of desperate bushrangers, who infested the neighbouring country, and whose attacks were especially directed against individuals and parties bringing gold from the diggings. In forming a force to assist me in my special duties, I was instructed to give particular attention to one John Rudd, a sergeant in the Melbourne police, who had distinguished himself on several occasions, by tracking, single-handed, some of the most dangerous bushrangers to their lairs, and, by dint of sheer personal strength and daring, bringing them fifty or sixty miles with their feet tied under their horses' bellies, as prisoners to Melbourne.

Upon my arrival I made inquiry of the superintendent of the Melbourne police as to the character of this man, and of his fitness for any position of command. The answers were not altogether satisfactory. I was told that he had been in the force some eight or ten years, and had shewn himself thoroughly brave and reliable. But there was a certain moroseness about the man—a want of sociability, that made him somewhat unpopular with his comrades. He never spoke of his antecedents, and there was a general belief that he was a convict, whose term of punishment had expired before entering the police. "For that matter, so are some of the best men in the force," said my informant, "but it doesn't

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do to make officers of them; nor, indeed, do I think Rudd would be happier in any higher position than that he now occupies. He seems to have no desire beyond the discharge of his duties, and the more difficult and dangerous those are, the better he appears to like them."

I thanked the superintendent for his information, and desired him to send Rudd to me in the morning.

I was finishing a letter when he came, and I desired him to be shown into an adjoining ante-room. The door between was slightly open, but evidently Rudd had no idea that I was within hearing, for I heard him presently ask my orderly—"Do you know what part of England Colonel Ruddleston comes from?" "Well, its a Hampshire family, I believe." "And—and he's a *baronite*, is he not?"

I did not hear the answer, but across all the intervening years came yet again upon my memory, that low, subdued growl of savage hatred and revenge,—“I'll murder you! I'll murder you! No matter how long I wait, I'll murder you!”

And a load fell from my heart at that moment, never again to encumber it. My vague, haunting apprehension was at an end. My enemy, if my enemy still he were, lived, was to be seen, confronted, encountered; no dogging spectre of the imagination, but a living man, like myself.

I rang the bell. “Show Sergeant Rudd in.” He entered.

I should not have known him had it not been for his voice; *that* I could never forget. Our eyes met. Mine betrayed no sign of recognition, but there was a certain restlessness in his that showed me I was not forgotten. He had certainly altered very much, from the long, lank vagabond of two and twenty years ago. He was now a well set up, well-proportioned

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fellow, and in his close-fitting, becoming uniform, looked a very model of strength, discipline, and smartness.

I conversed with him of the business I had in hand, the formation of a special force for the protection of the gold convoys, and the capture or dispersion of the bushrangers. His answers were straightforward, and to the purpose. He gave me much valuable information as to the most dangerous parts of the route from the gold fields, and the most advantageous and desirable localities for new stations.

He particularly described one place, about twenty miles from Melbourne, as being a favorite resort and head-quarters of some of the most desperate of the "stickers up." It was, he said, difficult to surround or to approach without detection by the occupants, and there were secret ways through the bush, known only to these desperadoes, by which, after harassing and injuring any pursuing force, they could make their escape unseen and unhurt.

I told him I should like to inspect this place, and proposed that he and I should ride over there at once.

"Had I not better bring a couple of file with me, Colonel? it's a dangerous place for you to venture without escort."

"Thank you, Sergeant," I replied; "but I've every confidence in you and myself, and we can talk more freely, perhaps, than if we were accompanied."

Rudd saluted, left, and in a few minutes returned, mounted and equipped for the journey. He had his carbine at his back, his pistols in his holsters; I had my sword and pistols also. My orderly, nothing doubting that he was to accompany us, had provided himself with some provisions for our refreshment during the journey. Much to his and Rudd's surprise, I told him we should not require his company; and having

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given over his stock as caterer to the sergeant, the latter and I rode off together for Hackett's Hole.

The road was rough and narrow, in some parts merely a bridle path; in these portions I suffered Rudd to ride on in front. When we were together he said nothing, except in reply to my questions, and during the whole journey appeared to have fallen into one of those morose fits of which his superintendent had spoken.

When we reached Hackett's Hole, I found it possessed all the strategical advantages as a station for our new force that Sergeant Rudd had ascribed to it. Having secured a position from whence we could command a view of the surrounding country, and where we were secure from the chances of surprise or ambush, we spread out on the stump of a tree the simple refreshments we had brought with us, and sat down to partake of them, whilst our horses also rested and refreshed themselves.

When we had finished our repast, Rudd asked if he should catch and saddle the horses preparatory to our homeward journey.

"One moment, Sergeant," I said, motioning him to remain seated, "there is another question I wish to ask you. Did you ever," I went on, fixing my eyes full upon his, "did you ever, in the course of your wanderings, meet with a man of the name of Jem Patch?"

He started to his feet; I rose also, and confronted him. His eyes fell, his face flushed, his chest heaved, and he trembled visibly. He was silent for nearly a minute before he spoke, and then lifting his eyes to mine, he answered in a low, measured voice—

"Yes, Colonel Ruddleston, I knew Jem Patch; knew him

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all the years of his miserable existence, from the day when, a child of crime, he became the companion of criminals; knew him when he groped in the gutter like a starving dog for a crust of bread; knew him when no one had a kind word or a helping hand for him; knew him when he repaid with hatred the scorn he had received, and when, more beast than man, he sought to consummate his villanies by the murder of a helpless child; knew him when injuries and illness made him unable to fly from the arm of the law, suffering the punishment of his crimes, a broken-spirited, nearly a broken-hearted man; knew him when first a word of kindness and religion fell upon his ears, and those were found who took the poor, stricken, guilty wretch by the hand, and strove to lift him from the mire in which he grovelled; knew him when he stood by the grave of his one friend, and vowed, God helping him, he would be a changed man; knew him in the years when he strove hard to keep his promise and to do his duty, and, vainly hoping his sin would not find him out, changed his name, and called himself John Rudd."

He stood silent before me, sad, erect, and motionless. I held out my hand to him.

"Sergeant," I said,—that at least was his right name—"many years ago we had a contest. I think I may fairly say you got the worst of it. I think I may truly say you deserved to get it. You threatened me then, and I've been afraid of you ever since. I shall never be afraid of you any more. No one has ever heard from me a word of our former meeting; no one shall hear a word of it while you live. To show that I am not affecting a confidence I do not feel, I will ride in front of you all the way home. I promise you I shall not look behind me, so, if you still owe me a grudge, it will be in your power

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at any moment to put a ball through me, and ascribe the act to the bushrangers, of whom you say there are always some lurking in the neighbourhood. Now, saddle the horses, there is peace between us, and, I hope, a happy and honourable future before you."

Again I held my hand out to him. He did not take it, but the tears stood in his eyes. He bowed his head very humbly, and then he saddled and brought round the horses.

We mounted, and rode home in silence. Nothing happened, by the way, to disturb or distract my thoughts, which, for the most part, ran on the inconsistency of my own behaviour; how I had been frightened at the shadow, whilst I had no fear of the substance. This man, without my having had any immediate reason to dread him, had been the nightmare of my existence; and yet here he was, with more motive than ever to do me injury, jogging along with a loaded carbine within a few feet of my back, and I feared him no more than if he were on the other side of the Equator.

We finished our homeward journey in silence, as we had begun it. The attendants took our horses. The sergeant dismounted, and saluted.

"Any further orders, Colonel."

"No! I shall probably want to see you again some time to-morrow, but I'll let you know in the morning. Good-night, sergeant, and remember what I've said to you."

I had reached the portico of my hotel, when I heard a rapid step behind me. It was the sergeant. He looked anxiously about, there was no one within hearing.

"Colonel," he said, in a low voice, "You offered me your hand this afternoon; I'd like to take it now, if you'll give it me. Remember me only as John Rudd, not as Jem Patch. I pray

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God to bless you, and I thank Him that He kept you safe from me."

I gave him my hand, and patted him kindly on the shoulder. As he strode away into the darkness I looked after him, admiring what a fine strong, soldierly-looking fellow he was, and wishing I had five hundred like him under my command.

I was taking breakfast next day, when my servant entered with a very white face, and said—

"There's great excitement at the Police Barracks, Sir Thomas. Sergeant Rudd, who was with you yesterday,"—

"What of him?" I exclaimed.

"Shot himself last night, and was found dead in his room this morning!"





The Electric Light.

THE great charm about electricity is, that nobody knows what it is. We see some of its effects, and by observing and studying them we learn sufficient to make some use of it, but we cannot pull it to pieces as we can air or water. When the American proposed to give a lecture on the South Pole, and it was objected, that it had never been visited, he replied, "That is just it; no one can contradict me." And so, when one man puts a magnet into the back of a hair brush, and substitutes fine wires connected with it for the ordinary bristles, and tells you that the use of it will magnetize your head, and that will make your hair grow; or when another man compounds a ring of metal, which, he says, will set up a current of electricity in anyone wearing it, and that the said current of electricity is a sovereign cure for rheumatism, we are bound to admit that we cannot absolutely contradict them. Perhaps Euclid and Algebra might be conveyed into the brain, by passing a coil of wire round those works, and establishing, by its means, a flow of electricity through the temples. Will not that be glorious? The class will assemble, and sit in a circle. The day's lesson will be prepared in connection with a battery; a wire will be attached to the heads of the pupils in such a manner as to complete the current, the lecturer will turn a handle for five minutes, and lessons will be over for that morning. But we have not got to that yet: when we do, you shall have an article in "Peter Parley" on Electric Cramming.

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

At present, in order to explain electrical phenomena at all, we must make believe very much, and ask you to accept certain phrases in a conventional, and not an absolute sense. For example, we call electricity a fluid, because it can be conveyed in exceptional force, compactness, or quantity, by a wire, along which it seems to *flow*. "Like beer, for example?" asked the 'bus driver in *Punch*. But no, it is not like beer; for if a fluid of that description were running along a pipe, and the pipe were cut at one part, it would be spilled, whereas the electric current darts across the chasm, and continues its course.

Then there are two sorts of electricity—or two effects—(It is necessary to consider them as two sorts, in order to explain oneself—Positive and Negative. You have seen electricity raised or collected by a glass cylinder, turned by a handle, and rubbing against silk. This vitreous electricity is called Positive. Now, take a piece of sealing-wax, and rub it till warm on your sleeve. It will become electric, and attract minute pieces of paper. This resinous electricity is called Negative. That there is a real difference is proved by hanging two little pith balls by threads of silk. Touch each of them with a stick of sealing-wax rubbed till electric, and they will repel each other; touch them in like manner with a glass rod that has been rubbed with silk, and they also repel each other. But charge one with positive electricity from the glass, and the other with negative electricity from the sealing-wax, and they will attract each other. So, as the result of experiment, you get the rule that bodies charged with the same sort of electricity repel one another, but bodies charged with different sorts attract each other.

The ordinary electrical machine, consisting of a glass

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

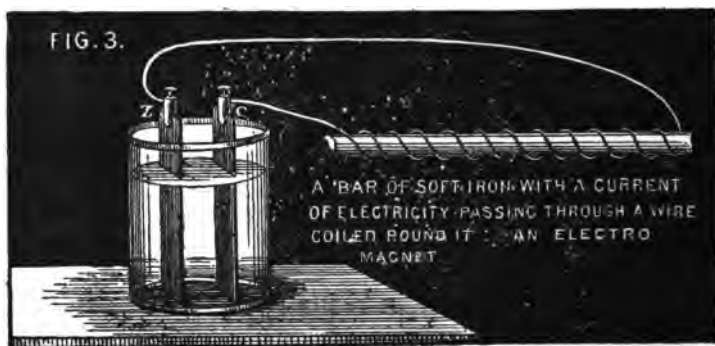
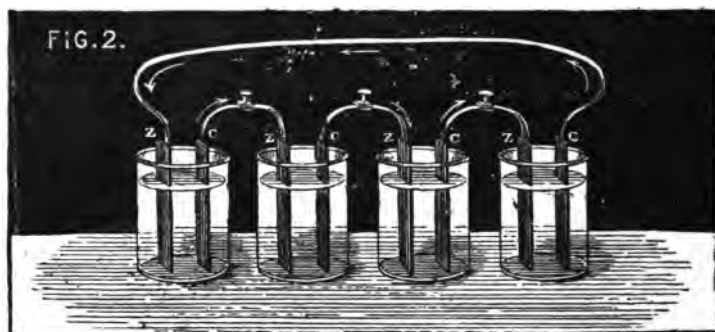
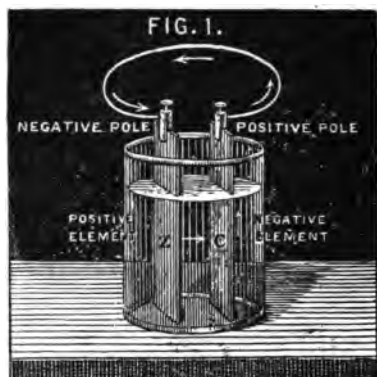
cylinder turned by a handle, so as to rub against something which excites the current, which is collected by means of metal points placed close to the glass, is all very well for experiments, and for giving shocks, and there is no expense attached to it after you have once bought it. But, besides the labour of turning the handle, there would be a difficulty about keeping up a sufficient supply of electricity for any practical purpose from such a source. The galvanic battery is expensive, but convenient, since it produces a perpetual current without mechanical aid. A plate of zinc and a plate of copper are placed upright in a vessel containing sulphuric acid and water, and connected at the top by a wire. Then a current of electricity will begin to flow from the top of the copper plate, along the wire to the top of the zinc plate, down that, and across from the bottom of the zinc plate to the bottom of the copper plate, and so round again.

The top halves of these plates are called *poles*, the bottom halves are called *elements*, and that pole or element *from* which the current is passing is called positive; that to which it flows is called negative. There is no particular meaning in the terms, but the action of the electricity must be indicated somehow.

Supposing someone was reading this paper to you, and as it was not a story of adventure, you did not pay particular attention to it, so that the words went in at your right ear, and out at your left. Then your right ear would be a positive pole, and your left ear a negative pole.

So the copper has a positive pole and a negative element, and the zinc a negative pole and a positive element.

It is necessary to bear all this in mind, for fear of confusion arising from the conventional terms *positive* and *negative*, which



THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

are also applied to the two different sorts of electricity. You may call lead heavy, and you may call that lecture on archæology you went to hear heavy, without mixing up the metal with the discourse. In the same way keep the positive and negative electricity poles and elements separate. Or you may call the positive pole of a battery an anode, and the negative a cathode, if you like. But then you ought to know a good deal about various machines and methods, or electricians will think you an imposter, for using their big words ; and when you have got so far you may call the wire which joins the two plates an electrode.

If this same wire is severed, the current of electricity from copper plate to zinc plate immediately ceases, and everything is quiescent. Join it again, and you will see bubbles gathering on the copper plates, showing that hydrogen is being set free, by the zinc being oxidised by the action of the sulphuric acid. But there, we are getting into chymistry.

A galvanic battery is composed of several of these vessels, with zinc and copper plates in them, each of which is called a cell. But, of course, these various cells must be connected, and that is easily done, by having a wire from the copper plate of the first cell to the zinc plate of the second ; another from the copper plate of the second to the zinc plate of the third, and so on, and then connecting with one wire the outer zinc plate of No. 1, with the outer copper plate of the last.

There are a great many variations of this description of galvanic battery, but they all go on the same principle. The negative element may be platinum, as in Grove's battery, or copper, as in Daniell's, or a mixture of carbon and manganese, as in Leclanche's, but the positive element is always composed of zinc. But there are several reasons, a principal one

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

being the expense, why the galvanic battery should not be practically useful for electric lighting on a large scale, and the machines which are used for this purpose are called electric generators.

There is a force in Nature which is as mysterious and more weird than electricity, and that is magnetism.

The loadstone is found in many places. It has the property of attracting iron, and a bar of it balanced properly will point North and South. Put a piece of steel with this metal, and it becomes an artificial magnet for ever. A piece of soft iron, while under the influence of the loadstone, will also show magnetic qualities, which, however, will vanish with the withdrawal of the natural magnet. This has been known for ages, but it is a modern discovery that magnetic power can likewise be imparted to a bar of steel or iron, by passing a current of electricity through a wire wound round it.

If this bar is of steel, it will become a permanent magnet; if of soft iron, the magic power will last only so long as the current is kept up. This last is called an *electro magnet*. But suppose a coil of wire without the iron bar, would that not have the magnetic attraction which it can impart? Yes, while the current was passing through it, it would; and there is a name for such a coil—it is called a *solenoid*.

That is part of the knowledge necessary to understand the action of an electric generator; but it is of no use unless you will also pay attention to this, that as a current of electricity can make a magnet, so a magnet can produce a current of electricity in a coil of wire forming a circuit (that is, with the two ends joined). This is called an *induced current*. The approach of the positive pole of a magnet will cause the current to flow in one direction, and of the negative pole in the opposite direction.

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This is the principle upon which a magneto-electric generator is formed:—There is a fixed permanent magnet, shaped like a horse-shoe, and in front of the two poles of it the two coil-surrounded soft iron cores of an electro magnet are made to revolve rapidly, as close as possible without touching. As each electro magnet approaches the positive pole of the permanent magnet, a current of electricity is set up in one direction. As it nears the negative pole this direction is reversed; but a continual current in the same direction can be secured by an ingenious apparatus, called a *commutator*, fixed to the axis of the revolving coils, which is made to collect the currents, and pass them off in one steady flow. But it is a great deal too complicated for me to attempt to explain here. Indeed, I fear that the whole affair is puzzling; but it is impossible to make it quite clear without the actual apparatus before us. There are so many little details which explain themselves when you see them, and which yet it would be very tedious to give a minute account of. But it is very easy to see a magneto-electric or a dynamo-electric machine, and to get the different parts explained to you; and if your curiosity is sufficiently excited to make you pursue such investigation, you will find it really very interesting.

Anyhow, however complicated the machine may be, we have got our current of electricity, and we find that some metals conduct it better than others, silver being the readiest conductor, and copper the next. Bad conductors resist the passage of the current, and this resistance causes heat, which, under certain conditions, becomes so intense as to consume the wire along which it is passing.

If you break a wire containing a current of electricity, and

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bring the broken ends close together, but not touching, the electricity will leap across the gap, but as this break gives great resistance to it, proportionate heat is caused, and its course is marked by a flash of light. Now put a piece of carbon in this gap, and break that, and bring the broken ends close together. Carbon being a very bad conductor indeed, the heat will be intense, giving out that brilliant flame which we are familiar with, for here we have the electric light. The positive carbon, that from which the current flows, burns away faster than the negative carbon, and the former becomes hollowed as it consumes, while the latter always maintains a point.

But as the carbon consumes, and the ends become more and more distant, the light wanes, till it finally dies out. To remedy this many ingenious devices have been had recourse to, by which the ends are pushed on by machinery at the same rates as they consume, so as to maintain always the same distance, and consequently the same light, until they are entirely consumed, the positive carbon always being kept uppermost, as the light is best reflected downwards from its concave end. And these lamps are more or less successful, though an occasional winking and blinking shows that perfection has not yet been quite reached.

The electric candles, of which Jablochhoff's is probably familiar to you by name, are composed of two thin sticks of carbon, arranged side by side, so that the current shall pass from top to top, forming an arc of light not subject to alteration from the varying distance of the poles, which, in this instance, must keep their relative positions till the candle is burnt out. The electric current will not spring sideways across the tops in the first instance, however, unless a strip of

FIG. 4.

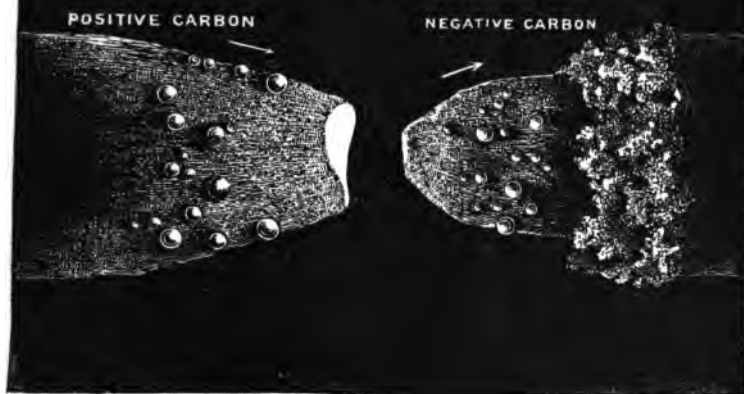
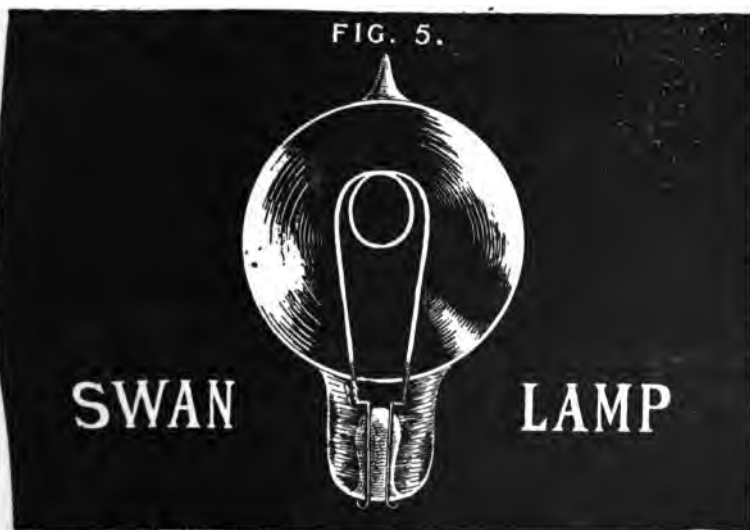
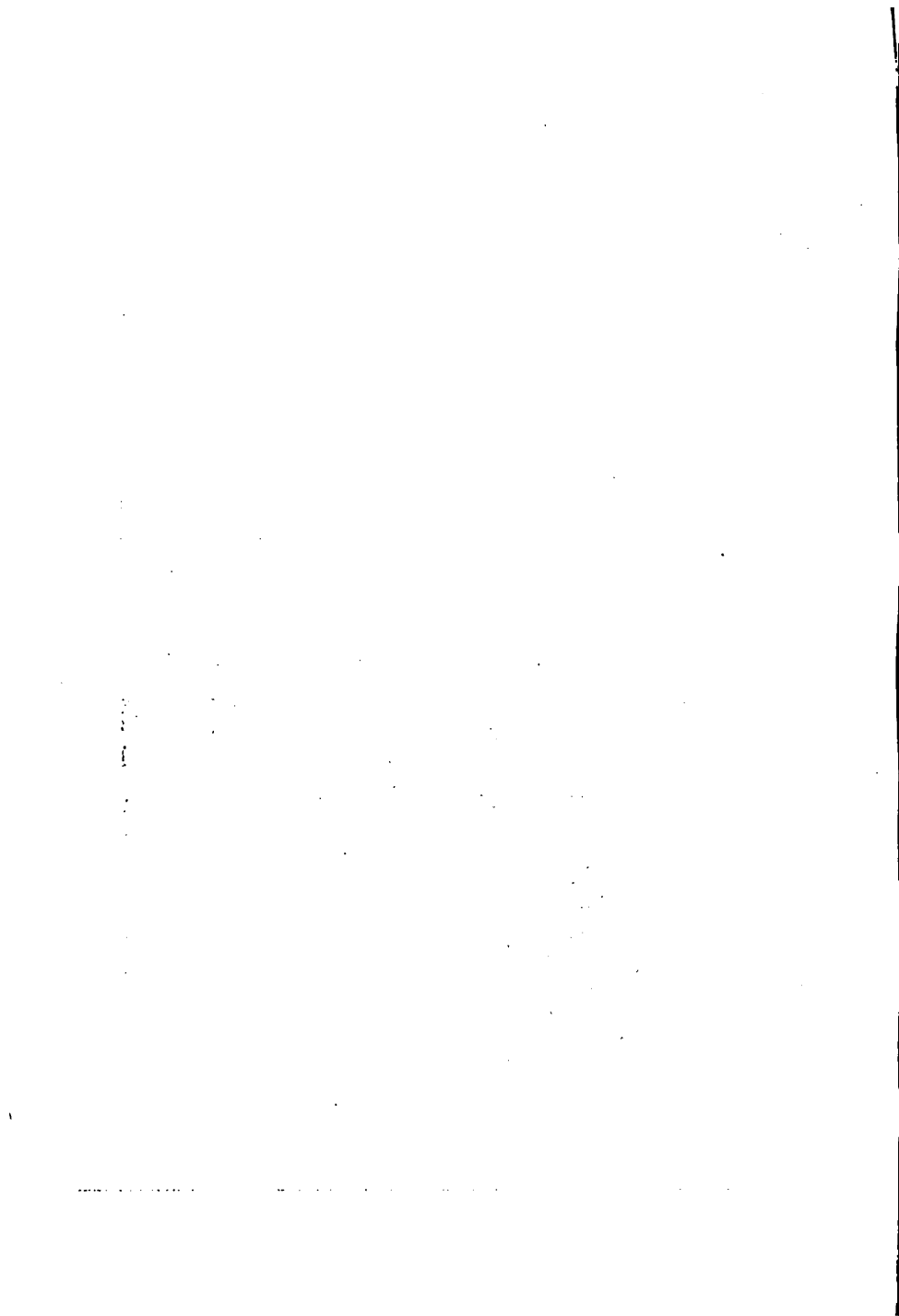


FIG. 5.





THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

carbon is laid across to complete the circuit. But once started, it goes on all right.

But what makes electric lighting most generally useful is the invention of the *Incandescent Lamp*.

We always used to believe that nothing could burn without air, and we were right in the sense that nothing can *consume away* by burning without air. But a piece of carbon or other material can become incandescent, and give out a most brilliant light without air, and yet will not consume for want of air. In fact, modern electricians have solved the ancient problem—"How to eat your cake and have it too." They burn their candle, and yet it is never consumed.

A cotton thread, a strip of bamboo, a root, or some other suitable substance is converted into carbon by a method which leaves it sufficient toughness, and is then fixed in a globe, through the bottom of which pass the wires, with which each end of the filament is connected, and from which the air has been exhausted. And this is done in such a manner that the globe remains airtight at the base, where the wires enter. Then, when there is no current of electricity passing, all is dark in the globe; but when the magic power commences to flow along the wire, it reaches the connecting kink of carbon, which at once leaps into a white glow, and yet, having no air, is unable to consume. The Swan lamp has the carbon in the shape of a loop, with a turn at the top of it; the Edison like a U; another like an M, and no doubt there will be many variations.

You may have been at a theatre lighted by incandescent electric lamps, and noticed that they are made to give more or less light, according as the rise or fall of the curtain, or the change of scene required, just as easily as gas is turned up or

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

down. The faster the conducting electro magnets revolve, the stronger the current of electricity, and the brighter the light.

As it is obviously inconvenient always to have a big machine at work to provide a light, many ingenious schemes have been devised for storing electricity. If you have ever seen any electrical experiments at all, you are familiar with the Leyden jar, coated with tin foil, inside and out, and charged with electricity. But it holds very little, and a more effective method of forming a storage battery has been found out by M. Planté. Put two strips of lead in a glass containing water mixed with one-eighth of sulphuric acid. Couple up three cells of a battery, and connect one wire from it to one of the lead plates, and the other to the other. Oxide of lead will form on the plate connected with the positive pole of the battery. After some time detach the battery wires, and join the plates by a wire passing round a galvanometer, and you will find that a current is passing between them in the reverse direction to the former one—proof of the electricity stored within. But when the saving of expense is of no importance this storage may be effected in a very compact and handy form, as, when ladies wear an electric star in their hair at a ball, and carry the stock of electricity which keeps it going somewhere about them—I have no idea where. Mrs. Parley does not wear electric stars.





Through Many Perils; or, Adventures with a Magic Lantern.

CHAPTER I.

I AGREE TO RUN AWAY FROM HOME WITH A TRAVELLING
SHOWMAN.

I WAS born and reared in the beautiful city of Sydney, the capital of New South Wales, and therefore I'm a *cornstable*. Yes, Australian boys are nicknamed cornstables, because they grow so quick and shoot up so tall and so thin, but they fill out and make fine men, for all that—only give them time.

For the rest I expect they are very much like other boys, only, perhaps a little more free and easy, and self-dependent, for they go to school, and play football and cricket, and run, row, and ride, especially ride, for in our country you can often buy a very decent horse for half-a-crown, and if you don't happen to live in a town, you can turn him loose to graze in the bush, and so his feed costs nothing.

Then as to our reading. We get all your boys' papers, only we have to pay twopence instead of a penny apiece for them, which is rather a shame, whilst "Robinson Crusoe" we know as well as ever you do; and when December comes, which is our midsummer, and blazing hot, I can tell you, we look out for "Peter Parley's Annual," and, dear me, how strange some of the stories do seem, and the pictures as well, to lads who have never seen ice or snow, and so can only guess what fun sliding, and skating, and snowballing must be. And then as to the ghost stories in some of the Christmas Supplements. Why, though our country is as big as the whole of Europe, and dotted all over with towns and cities, we haven't got a haunted house in one of them, that I ever heard tell of. Now that *is* an odd thing, isn't it?

Before my tale is ended, however, I shall tell you about some ghosts that I made myself, and which frightened a whole lot of black fellows, and saved my own life, through their mistaking me for a magician, or something of the kind. And that reminds me that perhaps I'd better *begin* my story; for I've a lot of strange things to tell in it that may, perhaps, seem as wonderful to you as your tales about snow, and ice, and haunted houses and ghosts seem to me.

Now, I know, from what I've read, that English boys are as foolish as us cornstables in many things, and often want to be anything rather than what their parents know its best that they *should* be. Some are mad to become soldiers, and others to run away to sea, whilst not a few, who have been to a theatre or a circus, think that if they could become actors or star riders, they'd be as happy as the days are long.

Well, not so very many years ago, I was a young chuckle-head of the last kind, and was show mad. I would follow a

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circus procession throughout its entire perambulation of the city, forgetful of my dinner, and the certain thrashing that I should receive for missing afternoon school, whilst, as to the theatre, I'd willingly have starved myself a whole fortnight to win the honour of carrying a banner in a procession, or to be a frog or rat in the Christmas pantomime, for we've two stunning theatres at Sydney, I can tell you, and the performances are first-class, and no mistake.

My lot was not destined to be cast at either circus or theatre, however. It was to be a much more humble one; yet, when the chance came, I jumped at it as eagerly as a barracouta jumps at a flying fish, and the consequence was, that I was as thoroughly *taken in* as is the aforesaid flying fish, when the barracouta's jaws once close on it. I was not so much *down in the mouth*, however, for, on the contrary, I was elated with joy.

The thing happened in this manner. I was wandering one evening about Woolloomooloo, one of our prettiest suburbs, when I came upon a shabby little hall, whose doors were, for a wonder open, whilst above them was an illuminated transparency, representing two bodies of Australian savages brandishing spears, waddies, and nulla-nullas, and about to meet in deadly encounter, one band being led on by an enormous black giant, and the other by a wild white man, attired, or rather *unattired*, like his sable companions.

Underneath this picture was painted, in big, striking letters: "Panorama of the wonderful adventures of James Moril, the shipwrecked British sailor, and wild white man. Reserved seats, 2s. Front seats, 1s. Back seats, 6d. An extraordinary spectacle that no one should miss witnessing."

I thought the last remark very sensible, and I was quite

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willing to act up to the advice therein contained ; but then I'd only a penny about me, and the lowest charge for admission was sixpence. That was decidedly awkward.

Not many people seemed to be going in, so the short, squat man in the open doorway, who was dressed in a very large plaid suit, and wore drab boots, a high white hat, and a bright scarlet neck-tie, banged a huge drum, and yelled forth the monster attractions of his exhibition by turns. Then, all at once, his eyes rested on me, and understanding, perhaps, my eager looks, he called me up to him, and said :—

“ Like to see the show ? ”

“ Yes, sir,” I rejoined.

“ Then,” said this good Samaritan, as he fished a handful of papers out of a big side pocket, “ Get inside, and sell as many of these programmes as you can for a penny apiece. Look sharp about it, and bring me the money behind the curtain, when you can't get no more.”

Never was command so joyfully obeyed. I felt as though treading on air, instead of a remarkably dusty floor ; and never, perhaps, have I felt so proud before, or since, as I was whilst disposing of that handful of penny programmes, for it seemed to me at the time that by the act I claimed a kind of kindred with the wild white man, and that a portion of his fame and glory reflected on myself.

When the room was about half full, and no more would come in, the man in the white hat and plaid suit closed the door, sallied down the hall, mounted on to a kind of stage, and then, after beckoning to me, passed behind a great white sheet of stretched canvas, that covered that end of the hall.

As soon as I had joined him, and given him the money I had received, and the bills I hadn't disposed of, he seemed

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pleased, and told me I was a good boy, and should manage the thunder and lightning as a reward, which rather frightened me, until he explained that a large sheet of tin, well shaken, would make the thunder, and half-a-dozen tiny heaps of grap powder on a tray (to be ignited, one at a time, with a common lucifer match), the flashes of lightning that would precede the thunder peals.

Well, I saw the wonderful exhibition, and I played my humble part in it, though I esteemed it quite the reverse of humble at the time. It was but a magic lantern affair after all, showing, in a succession of views, the adventures amongst Queensland savages of a sailor, who was the sole survivor of a wreck on that inhospitable coast, and whose life had been spared by these blacks whom he lived with until he forgot even his own tongue. I have since learnt that his was a true story; but I think this show dressed the actual facts up in a pretty voluminous garb of fiction.

I didn't think so then, but swallowed everything with as great an avidity and as implicit faith as nervous old ladies swallow homœopathic pills, and when the exhibitor called the magic lantern a phantasmagoria, I surveyed it with as much awe as though it had been a Krupp gun or a Woolwich Infant, both which awful instruments of destruction I had read of.

The performance over, I would have gone out with the crowd had not the owner of the exhibition detained me.

"I've taken a great fancy to you, my lad," said he, "and I feel a great inclination to make your fortune. How would you like to travel with me and—the show, eh?"

I was so filled with rapture at the very thought, that I couldn't answer him.

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The artful rascal saw how I took the bait, and at once went on with—

“It'll be a good thing for you, and I'm sure I don't know how I come to be so good-natured. Dear me! what thousands of miles you'll travel, and what strange and wonderful sights you'll see. I'm going from here straight away to the north, where pine-apples grow in the fields just like cabbages, and may be had for the picking. You'll have to work, of course, but if you'll go I'll make you my pardner instead of my servant, and instead of vulgar wages—for I can see with half an eye that you are a little gentleman—you shall have—let me think—a twentieth part of the profits after all expenses of every kind are paid. By George! you'll soon make your fortune at that rate; and when you returns to your parents with diamond rings on your fingers, a gold watch and chain, and every pocket a-bulging out with bank notes, they'll commend you for running away from 'em now without a word of leave-taking.”

To cut a long story short, Horatio Mortimer at last persuaded me to take the most foolish and wicked step that any boy possibly can take, namely, to run away from home; it no more striking me that his real object was to obtain a willing drudge who would expect no payment for anything that he did, than that his real name was Daniel Sluggs, or that the entire profits of his concern were next to nil.



CHAPTER II.

I FIND, TO MY SURPRISE, THAT ALL IS NOT GOLD THAT GLITTERS.

I MIGHT not have gone off with Mortimer, *alias* Sluggs, had I not received a severe thrashing from my father on arriving home for returning so late, and felt inwardly convinced that I should get another at school the following morning for not having prepared my lessons overnight.

These two straws checked any repentance on my part, so that though I went to bed much later than usual I was up with the sun, and half an hour later stole out of the house with my best suit and my money box in a small hand bag, and having first pinned to my toilet cloth a scrap of paper on which I had scrawled with a very blunt pencil:—

Gone to make my fortune ; will come back as soon as 'tis done.

If this may seem a heartless way of saying good-bye to my parents, I didn't intend it for such. The bit of paper wouldn't hold more, and I was too agitated to write it even had it been a larger scrap. My heart was in my mouth, as the saying is, not only until I was out of the house, but even until I had turned the corner of the next street ; nor was I quite myself before I had crossed Hyde Park, and got half way up South Head Road in the direction of Surrey Hills.

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Here, at a spot which had been appointed between us overnight, I met Horatio Mortimer. But he was no longer the imposing-looking individual of the evening before; for his morning toilet was shabby, his high black hat greasy, and the worse for sundry dents, whilst his throat and wrists were innocent of cuff and collar, and his eyes red, as though he had been carousing all night.

He received me very graciously, however, called me a trump and a Trojan, which I accepted as high compliments, and when he asked me what I had in the bag, and I told him my best suit of clothes and my money box, he was even good enough to say that he'd take charge of the latter lest I should get robbed of it. I *did*.

We jogged along, side by side, until we got to a stable yard belonging to a third class inn in Brickfields Hill, and here Mortimer told me to walk on alone as straight as ever I could go, and that by the time I'd got well out into the country he'd overtake me in his trap, and then I should ride alongside him.

To hear was, of course, to obey; so away I started, with a light heart and empty hands, for he had taken charge of my bag and its belongings, and I never had it or them again in my own possession from that time forth.

When I had got well out into the bush, or what Mortimer, being an Englishman, called the country, I seated myself on a little mound under a blue gum tree, and waited for my companion to come up, for the morning was very close and sultry, and a hot wind had commenced to blow.

Had my thoughts been less busy with the future I should have noticed that the hillock was a white ants' nest, said ants being as large as bees, and so strong in the jaws that they are called *bull dogs*.

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As it turned out, they let me know what good right they had to the name before many minutes were over, making me feel as though red hot needles were being thrust into my calves, so that in a twinkling I was dancing like a bear on hot bricks, with my trousers torn off and waving inside out in my hands, and my shirt fluttering in the air.

Hardly had I got rid of the *bull dogs* when I heard a sound that caused my flesh to creep, so terrible was it, but as 'twas followed up by a peal of laughter, my fear was somewhat allayed, and venturing to glance in its direction, I saw Horatio Mortimer seated in a vehicle which seemed to be half cart and half buggy, and which was being dragged slowly along by evidently the very animal that had given vent to the lion-like roar, and which, from pictures I had seen, I now knew to be a donkey; but it was the first I had ever beheld alive, and I didn't like the idea of getting behind it very much.

But I wasn't asked to enter the vehicle yet, for "my partner," after he had laughed at my appearance, and enquired whether I "called those things legs or broomsticks, and if I was practising to be a wild white man, like Moril?" signed to me to go deeper into the bush, which, when I had pulled on my trousers again, I did, whilst he followed me up in the cart until the road was quite lost to our view.

Then, when we had nothing but the big trees with their dark green leaves and snow white trunks around us, he got down out of the trap, told *Lion*, that was the donkey, to stand still, which he seemed quite tame enough to do, and then taking a couple of small bottles and a comb, a tooth brush and a paint brush out of his pocket, he said he was going "to make me a handsome boy that the pretty young ladies would take a fancy to," and straightway proceeded to do it.

Hair dye and some kind of skin-staining liquid were the ingredients that effected this transformation; and a very effectual one it was, for my parsnip-hued hair was soon as black as a crow's plumage, and a complexion that had been very like that of a trussed fowl's, changed to one of almost Egyptian darkness.

"Now," said my new friend and benefactor, when he had completed his task, and shown me my reflection in a little pocket mirror that he had about him, "I don't think your own father or mother would know you; and, so if the traps* are set to hunt you up there's little chance of their finding you out, even if they stare in your face with your phottygraff in their hands; but to make it all the more safe you shall pass for my son, and answer to the pretty name of *Aubrey Mortimer*. What do you say to that?"

I can't remember *what* I said now, but I remember that I was highly delighted, both with my change of appearance and name, for, in point of fact, I was plain James Smith, and in general hailed as *Jemmy Smith*, that is to say when I wasn't called "*Parsnips*," or "*Young Ironmoulds*," appellations which I had owed to the colour of my hair and my freckles, and which had been the cause of many fights, in only about a third of which I had come off victor.

When I had thus been made "handsome and unrecognisable," I was invited to mount the vehicle, which I did with some misgiving, owing to the to me strange animal that was in the shafts, for I verily believe there are not half a dozen donkeys in all Australia; nor are they needed where horses are so cheap and plentiful that even beggars ride.

Before we got back into the high road I discovered that

* Police.

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the vehicle contained, besides our two selves, the magic lantern, the great box of slides, the rolled up sheet of white canvas, huge bundles of bills and posters, a pot of paste and a brush, and, lastly, a large shabby portmanteau, in company with my natty little one.

My partner was very pleasant as we drove along towards the town of Parramatta, nine miles distant, where we were to exhibit that night, and did his best to prevent my experiencing any sorrow at leaving home.

He was full of schemes for making a fortune, too, one of which was to paint me all over, and exhibit me as a spotted wild boy from the great interior deserts, and to change the donkey into a striped zebra, representing it as the steed upon which I had approached the confines of civilisation (from the same *then* unknown and unexplored region) on the occasion of my capture.

"When I travelled with a circus in the old country, I was a great hand at making up them beautiful spotted horses, which is, in most cases, all paint, and folks see so little of mokes—that's to say, donkeys—in Australia, that we could pass *Lion* off as pretty nigh anything except a white elephant, and we might even make him pass muster as a young 'un of that species, if we could only take off his tail, and splice it on to his nose."

I fought shy of being "a spotted wild boy from the sandy deserts of the interior," however, for the scheme presented itself to me as an imposition, and a swindle, and I did sufficient credit to my bringing up as to set my face firmly against it on that account.

I didn't seem to rise in Mr. Mortimer's good opinion by my want of enterprise, as he termed it; "But," he added, with a

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grin, "as I was his partner of course I had a right to give an opinion."

Before a month was over (for I have neither space nor leisure to describe our early trials and performances in detail, so much of weird peril and adventure is there to tell of as happening at a later date) I had begun to doubt whether any fortune was to be made as Mr. Mortimer's partner, and to be bitterly sorry at times that I had ever left my comfortable home.

Long before that time I had discovered that I was the *working* partner, and he the *sleeping* one. On the road I had to whack and steer the donkey, the one a hard, and the other a difficult task, for the brute was as lazy and self-willed as he could be, and before entering the next town I had to draw a little way off the road, in order that I might put on my best clothes, arrayed in which I had then to push on ahead on foot, and on the strength of my "young gentlemanly" appearance, bargain for board and lodging (whilst we remained in the place), where no payment would be demanded on account, which Mortimer had explained to me, "it was beneath the dignity of travelling professionals to pay."

As soon as I had in this manner played the part of jackal to my partner, the lion, I had again, on the strength of my respectability of appearance, to secure a place for our entertainment, paying half-a-sovereign as a deposit for the rent of the hall or room, as though that was the usual thing with us, instead of a guinea. And then I had to discover the bar parlour and contiguous stable in which my partner and our steed had, by this time located themselves, and, after reporting progress to the former, to go and see that the latter was fed and in his stall, to again don my seedier apparel,

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and rumple my hair, and soil my face and hands, preparatory to issuing forth with the paste pot, and a great roll of posters, in the capacity of bill sticker, at which I had not only to perambulate each street of the town, seizing upon every yard of blank wall for our announcements; but, if the place was small, to trudge a mile or so out along each road leading therefrom to enable the great smooth trunks of the gum trees to also tell the tale.

By the time I got back to the stable, made myself look decent again, and repaired to our lodgings (once more in the character of a young gentleman), dinner was generally over, and what had been put by for myself grown lukewarm, or dried up to nothing in the oven, and, in any case, directly I had bolted it, I had to hurry off with Mortimer to the hall, to help him to arrange everything for the night, our respective shares of the labour generally being that he would smoke and direct, and I would practically perform.

As soon as all things were ready, it was time to get back to tea, and, in general, I had to scald my throat with the second cup, so that the door of the hall should be opened in time (my task again), to let in the expectant crowds, before they burst it down in their eagerness to secure good places, Mortimer presently coming along with the lodging or boarding-house mistress, or some of her daughters, to whom he had offered a complimentary admission, a courtesy which, as I afterwards discovered, in nine cases out of ten they had to reciprocate the next morning, by permitting us to depart after paying only half the amount of our bill for bed and board, &c., the excuse always being that the "house the night before had been such an unexpectedly bad one, that it really had not paid our expenses, but in three months' time we should be returning

that way, and then he would defray the balance of what was now owing, and for our then accommodation in *advance*," &c., &c.

In this plausible manner, and he really was *very* plausible, my partner would make half-a-sovereign pay for two dinners, teas, suppers, beds, and breakfasts, with frequently sundry glasses of hot brandy and water as well; whilst, provided we could only get all our traps and belongings out of the hall in time (a task which frequently engaged *me* up to midnight) the ten shilling deposit would be all that the proprietors or shareholders would obtain for its use, gas included.

But though we didn't pay, as a rule, half what we should have done, we didn't half fill our own pockets, either, and I soon began to discover that my twentieth share of the profits would never send me back to my parents with a gold watch, a diamond ring, and my pockets bulged out with bank notes, as had been promised.

By the time that I was *fully* convinced on this point, however, we were so far away from Sydney, that to return, like the repentant prodigal, without money to pay coach or steamboat fare, would have been impossible; and Mortimer never let me have sufficient in my possession at one time to accomplish half, or even a quarter of the distance.

He continued, however, to be kind to me after his manner, though, had I consented to be a spotted wild boy, I think he would have been kinder; and our show certainly required *some* new attraction.

One day, he said to me, when we had worked pretty well the whole colony, and dared not return on our tracks, "Aubrey, my boy, I've made up my mind that we'll take ship for Queensland; the towns are newer there, and the country aint

overrun yet with exhibitions. Come, cheer up, for that's the land where pine-apples grow in the fields like cabbages, acres of them together, and tobacco in like manner. I want a native mummy, too, and they're to be found in the trees occasionally I've heard; and if I could a'so lay hold of a young native as couldn't talk our lingo, I'd have a spotted wild boy ready to hand; and the mummy and the boy together would make our fortins in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, not even counting the zebra."

Well, the long and the short of it was, that the next day we exhibited at Newcastle (celebrated for its coals), and the one after that again sailed from that port for Brisbane aboard the inter-colonial steamer *You Gangs* (cart, donkey and all), going as deck passengers, at the cheapest possible rate. But Mortimer consoled himself for present discomforts by vowing that we'd return in the saloon.

Little did either of us imagine what perils we would have to encounter before even a chance of returning presented itself.



CHAPTER III

QUEENSLAND JUSTICE. IN THE LAND OF THE SAVAGE.

FORTY-EIGHT hours after leaving Newcastle we entered Moreton Bay, and steamed up its magnificent expanse of water in the direction of Brisbane river.

There was no need for Mortimer to inform me that we were entering another colony, for the heat, and the wonderful vegetation that fringed the shores, told me plainly enough that I had quitted the land of my birth.

Before long we passed naked black men harpooning sea-cows from strangely-shaped canoes, and whilst I stood watching their prowess one over-balanced himself, owing to the vigour with which he hurled his three-pronged trident, and hardly was he submerged, when, with a shriek, he sprang half-way out of the water, seemingly, half man and half fish, but the next instant the two parts separated, and the poor wretch was *nothing* below the waist, for the jaws of an enormous shark had closed upon him there, and snapped him in two. I shuddered with horror as I beheld his two companions drag his still quivering trunk into the boat, which we soon left far astern.

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A few minutes later we were steaming up the Brisbane river, each bank being a perfect jungle of tropical vegetation. Creeping plants with waxen leaves, and the most gorgeous flowers creeping up the trunks and hanging in festoons from the branches of the tallest forest trees, whilst butterflies of quite as gorgeous tints, and of enormous size, fluttered in all directions; some, I am sure, would, with expanded wings, have covered an ordinary cheese plate.

Presently, however, the banks became more cleared, showing a white-washed, one-storied, deep-verandahed house here and there, and Mortimer suddenly exclaimed, with twice the excitement that he had shown at the death of the poor native, "*There* are the pine-apple and tobacco fields that I told you of. *Now don't* they grow like cabbages?" And when I came to look they certainly did, but the tobacco not a bit in the shape of bundles of cigars, which I had expected, but all green; and I don't believe my partner would have known it was tobacco if some one hadn't told him so first.

Soon after that we reached Brisbane, and landed at the wharf. It looked a new and half-finished place, as it *was* then, and everything in disorder. The first thing that I noticed was a lot of poor people picking over some dust and manure heaps, evidently for bones, and scraps of meat and bread.

"Emigrants. Victims of guide books and agents. Made 'em believe this was a land of milk and honey. Each given fifty acres of land to come out. Now find it grows nothing but stones, and snakes, and not worth having," said Mortimer.

A few minutes later I caught sight of a band of about a dozen black men, naked but for a narrow piece of dirty linen around their loins, and their heads surmounted by such an

abundance of woolly hair, that, at a little distance, it seemed as though they wore enormous black turbans.

These men were in charge of a stern-looking white, armed with a big stick, and they seemed to be every bit as dejected and miserable as the starving emigrants.

Mortimer had something to say about them also.

"Slaves," grunted he ; "only it wouldn't do to call 'em so. Come from Fidgee. Speculator takes a ship over to the islands, asks lots of natives to come aboard, feeds 'em on roast beef and champagne, and tells 'em that if they'll come over the water with him, that's how they'll live always, with no work to do. Then he gets 'em to put their marks to documents they don't understand, crams his ship with 'em, brings 'em here, and sends 'em up country, to the cotton and tobacco plantations, where they've to labour without wages for three years, fed on condemned stores from the ships. But, of course, that ain't slavery ; because, don't you see, they've come here willingly, and those that have brought 'em over can go to church or chapel with a clear conscience. Ah ! my lad, there's worse humbug going than spotted wild boys, and donkeys changed into zebras. But, come along, for my stomach's crying out cupboard."

So was mine also, for we had eaten very little aboard ship, both of us having proved very bad sailors. We made as quickly as we could, therefore, for the shop streets, and in the very first we entered we beheld what I took to be a number of gigantic tortoises sprawling all about the pavement in front of a restaurant."

"Turtles, as I'm a sinner !" exclaimed Mortimer, in great excitement. "Well, now ; I was told all about the emigrants and the Fidgeeans aboard the steamer, but not a word about

turtles. I wonder if they make 'em into soup, and if the soup's cheap."

He rushed over to the cook-shop window, and eagerly read something that was pasted up therein, the effect of which was that he came back, seized me by an arm, and dragged me into the restaurant, exclaiming the while—

"Threepence a basin, for what in Sydney they charge five shillings, and in London half-a-guinea. Threepence a basin. Three—pence—a—basin. We'll dine on turtle soup—on sea cow—which, they say, tastes exactly like veal, and finish up with pine-apples—a meal costing only sixpence a head, and fit for a king."

I must say that it *was* fit for a king, and the pine-apples, at a penny each, were almost as big as cauliflowers.

We liked our quarters so well, that we determined to put up there, and, having thus resolved, started back to the ship to get the donkey, and the cart, with our exhibition, and all its belongings, ashore, which we had been unable to do before.

Well, we hired a hall, and we billed the capital of Queensland as we had billed so many of the New South Wales townships, only, fortunately for us (for it was the last throw of the dice, as far as we were concerned), with much greater success.

For the first time in my entire experience, we had a crowded house. The result was, that my partner was in a high state of glee, and that I myself at last viewed as a possibility my one day returning to my parents with the gold watch and chain, diamond ring, and pockets stuffed out with bank notes, as Mortimer had promised I should do.

I was still somewhat proud of being a showman; chiefly because the affair appeared in print, and whatever appeared

in print I thought must be very grand. Taking advantage of this weakness on my part, Mortimer often argued that as "a spotted wild boy from the far interior I should appear in print also, and in the illustrated papers as well"; but the bait didn't take, for I was still too honest to become a thorough imposter, though I much fear that had my partner wanted me to figure as some young *chief*, all war paint, war whoop, and feathers, brandishing a spear or tomahawk, and doing the heroic, instead of appearing as so contemptible a thing as a *spotted* wild boy, the temptation would have been too overpowering, for I was thirteen then, and tall for my age, and had read "The Last of the Mohicans," and thought such savages very wonderful fellows indeed.

Little did I imagine at the time that before many days were over my head I'd be the *prisoner of savages*, and see a great deal more of them than I ever wish to see again. Ugh! It makes my flesh creep to this day whenever I think of it.

Though we drew good houses in Brisbane at first going off, chiefly, I expect, because, as yet, there was neither theatre, music hall, nor dancing room in the place, yet in a little while everyone who felt an interest in "The wonderful adventures of James Moril" had come and witnessed them, and gone away more or less satisfied, generally, I think, the latter, so that empty chairs and benches grew to be the order of the night once more, and our expenditure to exceed our receipts. "We must try fresh fields and pastures new, my boy," Mortimer said, at last. "We will work our way up the coast to Ipswich and Rockhampton, and then return to Sydney by sea. We've made forty pounds clear profit out of Brisbane, two of which belong to you, as my partner, and I'll take care of them for you, lad, I'll take care of 'em."

So the next day we started in our donkey cart for Ipswich, a town twenty-five miles distant, part of our way lying through a forest, where the pink blossoms of great chesnut trees perfumed the air, and the Moreton Bay fig tree drooped with luscious fruit, all intermingled with glossy-leaved bananas, and their golden clusters of pods, whilst rose-coloured cockatoos and many-hued paroquets flitted from bough to bough, and butterflies, as large as bats, and of a myriad glittering tints, perched on the great tropical flowers that hung in chains and festoons, making the air heavy with fragrance, from the tree branches.

Just as gorgeous in their coloring, too, were the snakes that sometimes crossed our path, or raised their heads above the flowers to hiss at us as we passed by, and occasionally we would catch sight of a bright green lizard, almost as large as a baby alligator, basking and glistening in the sun, and, seemingly, sound asleep.

We had left Brisbane about twelve miles behind, and got into a less thickly-timbered country, when we heard a variety of shouts and cries ahead of us, and on rounding the spur of some rising ground, suddenly caught sight of a couple of the Queensland Mounted Police pursuing about half a dozen naked aboriginals.

Another minute and they had come up with them, shot down a couple with their revolvers, ridden over and dispersed the rest, and were prancing and curvetting alongside of us, asking, laughingly, if we had any liquor or tobacco to spare.

"What did you shoot those two black fellows for?" demanded Mortimer.

"Oh, some of their tribe speared a white shepherd up at

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the Ten Mile last week, and so we've just obeyed orders and paid 'em out for it," responded one jauntily.

"And why did they spear the white shepherd?" persisted Mortimer.

"Because he peppered some of the black rascals with swan shot for prowling about his hut looking out for what they could steal," said the other trooper.

"*Did* they steal anything?"

"Not that I know of, mate," was the reply.

"And have you just killed the *same* black fellows who speared him?"

"I'm sure I don't know. *We* think they belong to the same tribe, and that's quite enough for us. The niggers are all so much alike, that there's no telling t'other from which, as the saying is, so for every white man they kill or wound we shoot two of *them*, and then we consider the debt's wiped out. That's Queensland justice, my good friend." *

The trooper spoke half jestingly and half sneeringly, and his companion immediately added:

"And as it's dry work arguing a point, now for the beer and baccy."

"I'd sooner see you hanged for murder than I'd give you either," retorted Mortimer, who, though a rogue in his own way, was anything but a cruel or hard-hearted one. "I call you cold-blooded butchers; yes, that's what I call you."

"As for that, mate, we obey orders, as I said before, and I can show you a Christian magistrate's warrant for what we've just done; a gentleman who goes to church every Sunday, and wouldn't trample on a worm, that's to say if it wasn't a *black* one. Well, *be* mean if you like, and go your way; and

* And it was regularly meted out up to 1869.

here's a bit of unasked for advice that you'd better lay to heart : Give the natives a wide berth yourselves after this, for I don't want the job of avenging such a mean cuss, I'm sure, and they will be sure to spear or waddy you after what's just happened if you give 'em half a chance."

And so saying, the two troopers galloped off, leaving us to our reflections, which weren't very agreeable ones, since the country we were traversing was very sparsely settled, and we had not a weapon of any kind with us.

For all that, however, we reached Ipswich, a stragglingly built, and quite new place, in safety, and performed there for five nights to fair houses.

Then we started on again for Rockhampton, a very much longer journey, and one that would take us several days to perform, accompanied by the disagreeable necessity of, for one or two nights, camping out in the bush, owing to townships, and even single houses, being so far between.

We dared not go back, however, as it would have been starving work to have revisited towns and cities that had already wearied of us; so we shut our eyes to possible dangers and disagreeables, and pressed on.

Three miles north of Ipswich we said good-bye to pineapple and tobacco fields, but soon found that guavas, and wild gooseberries and raspberries, as well as a species of custard-apple, grew wild in the now really tropical forests, and were delicious eating, though great bloated spiders, with hairy legs, and bodies as large as penny pieces, centipedes six or eight inches long, large red ants that would snap at your fingers viciously, give them but a chance, and snakes, all more or less deadly, had to be braved whilst in search of these dainties.

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As to the heat, it was something terrific, necessitating a rest during the middle of the day, when we would take the donkey out of the cart, fetter his fore-legs with a species of handcuffs called hopples, so that he could not wander far whilst grazing, and then lighting a fire, we would boil some tea over it in a tin saucepan, yclept a billy, make a damper cake of flour and water, and bake it in the ashes, and after enjoying a good meal (for hunger is a capital sauce) would lie down and go to sleep, and perhaps not start again until nearly evening ; for we preferred travelling on under the brilliant starlight, not only because it was so cool and pleasant, but also by reason that the natives, as a rule, fear to leave their camp fires of a night, through believing that all kinds of evil spirits are about.

“And we are now journeying over the very country where James Moril wandered as a wild man for so many years, never thinking that he should see a white face again ; and fifty years ago he'd have had to have travelled a good many hundred miles before he'd have had the slightest chance of beholding one. By Jove ! how the black natives would stare at an exhibition of our magic lantern. They'd call us *ghost makers*, I expect, for they believe in ghosts, I'm told, and they've an odd notion that white men are their own dead come to life again, which is why they never ill-treated us until we began to use them so shamefully,” Mortimer said, on one occasion.

“In what way have we used them shamefully ?” I asked him.

“Why we've shot all the animals, great and small, that God gave 'em to live on, and in nine cases out of ten only just for wanton sport, and when the poor half-famished creatures

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take one of the white squatters' many thousands of sheep in turn, he calls *that* thieving, and the shepherds pepper them with small shot for even looking at them with hungry eyes; then, when they retaliate on the shepherd, the mounted police are sent after them, and hunt them down like wild beasts, as we have seen. Now, I'm not a bloody or a revengeful man, but if I was an Australian black fellow, I think I'd try and kill every white man that I came across, the Christian savages!"

"I hope they won't turn to your way of thinking until we are out of the country, at any rate," I responded, with a shudder; though, little thinking at the moment how much cause I had for the fervent wish.



CHAPTER IV.

CAPTURED BY NATIVES. TO BE SLAUGHTERED ON THE MORROW.

WE slept that night in the primeval forest, and once or twice were awakened by a duet between our donkey and a *laughing jackass*—a bird with a small body, a large head, and an enormous bill—who will bray exactly like his four-legged brother, commencing and terminating each blare, however, with a hearty and prolonged chuckle, like a wicked old man's laugh.

Our poor *moke*, fancying that he had at last discovered, what, in all probability, he had never even seen since he came out, one of his own species, kept up the concert for a long while at a time, and more than once it was joined in by another strange bird, who kept shouting "*More pork*" as clearly as any human being could pronounce the words.

On all these accounts, we did not obtain a very good night's rest, and we had to get up betimes, to accomplish as much of our journey as possible before the great heat of the day set in, ere which time we hoped to traverse twenty miles.

We actually did a little more, only passing a single human residence on the way, a wattle, or dab hut, with a native

yclemen, or spear, sunk deep in the closed door, and two more in the window shutters.

After a good deal of knocking and shouting, a pale, scared-looking man showed himself, who told us he had defended his habitation the night before against a great number of furious savages, but after he had killed two or three with an old gun, they had drawn off, vowing, however, that they would come back before long.

He seemed to be frightened out of his wits, but would not leave his little homestead for all that, and so we continued our journey, after exchanging some tobacco, and two bottles of beer for a piece of bacon and some damper bread, for our provisions were beginning to fall short, and the information that we shouldn't pass another white settler's abode until we had done another forty miles of our journey, made us apprehensive on that score.

"I wish we'd left Rockhampton alone, or else gone to it by water," growled my partner, when we were once more on our way. "You can see now how reprisals work. A white shepherd peppers some black fellows with swan shot, because he thinks they intend to steal his sheep, and, rankling under their hurts, they slay the shepherd. In return, the police are let loose, and think that all is satisfactorily settled when they have killed two blacks in return for one white. But, very naturally, the natives don't see it in that light. Their blood is up, and little wonder; and now, very likely, they want to double the score also. The poor fellow we've just left is a gone coon, you may depend on it, and he is of the same opinion, or I'm much mistaken; whilst, as to ourselves, I shall be most uncommon glad when I tread the paving-stones of a civilised street once more."

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This way of talking made me feel far from comfortable myself, and I no longer envied Robinson Crusoe his island kingdom, *after* his discovery that savages visited it.

My thoughts were yet turned in that unpleasant direction, when we both caught sight, simultaneously, of three figures approaching us, all glossy black, native savages, carrying a bundle of thin reedy spears in their right hands, and oval shields, made apparently of bark, on their left arms.

Happily, they were a little more frightened of us than we were of them, fancying, perhaps, that we had guns in the cart, and in a minute they had vanished out of sight, but we were not much comforted by their flight, for the fear came upon us that they would, ere long, follow us up, in company with a great many more, and spear us at our next halting-place, whilst concealed themselves behind the bushes.

On this account we were not at all sorry to exchange the forest for an open plain of coarse grass, which the heat of the sun had changed into hay even whilst it grew. Thirty miles across it we could see a range of hills, with their sides well wooded, and in one part of the level expanse what, in the distance, looked like a flock of kangaroos. It was a wild and desolate scene, but whilst traversing it we could not be killed by foes hidden in ambuscade, and even that thought was a comfort now.

A day's journey on the other side of those mountains we hoped to find civilisation again, and at the end of a couple of days' travel our destination.

Meanwhile, we had to toil on, with nothing to shelter us from the tropical sun, and, I am sure, that had we had a thermometer with us, it would have marked more than a hundred degrees.

When we literally could not push any farther we camped, and got under the cart for shelter, where, though we had no appetite to eat, we found a little beer very welcome, as also did the poor donkey, who came and lapped it out of the hollow of our hands again and again.

We could not start again until sunset ; it was no use. Besides, we wanted the native's horror of night to have begun to exercise full sway upon them before we entered the wooded districts again. Then we could travel all through the night, we thought, without any very great risk of encountering them. So when the sun began to sink, like a red hot globe into a sea of blood, we re-harnessed *Lion*, and once more turned our faces northwards.

Ten minutes later, with a suddenness peculiar to tropical regions, the stars were looking down upon us from out an indigo-lined heaven, and conspicuous, among the rest, the glorious constellation of the *Southern Cross*, whilst, at the same time, a cool, southerly wind, called a *buster*, began to blow, causing us to feel positively chilly.

We had crossed the plain, and were just on the point of entering the forest again, when Mortimer uttered an ejaculation of surprise, and pointed towards three tree branches, planted upright in the earth, and supporting, at a height of about twelve feet above the ground, a sort of hammock, made of slabs of bark, above the top edge of which something small and round was dimly observable, with, fluttering in the breeze therefrom, what strongly resembled human hair.

Mortimer and I looked at each other, and his countenance exhibited, so I thought, apprehension, horror, triumph, and glee mingled most strangely together.

"We have found by chance just what I wanted," he said,

the next moment. "A Queensland mummy—a sun-dried native. Worth fifty pounds in Melbourne, but which we will make hundreds out of by exhibiting ourselves. Hurrah!"

He drove the donkey right alongside the weird erection, and stood upright in the cart, in order to obtain a better view of it.

Involuntarily, and with a mixed feeling of curiosity and repugnance, I followed his example, and this was what I beheld:—

A naked corpse, dried by the heat of the burning Queensland sun, till it resembled leather. Masses of long black hair adhered to the skull, and floated in the wind, as also did its beard and whiskers, which had grown to a great length. A solitary eye, seemingly hard as stone, glared with a dull, phosphorescent glow from out its socket, the chin had dropped, and the black, withered tongue was thrust out between rows of teeth that were as white as ivory. The mummy was evidently that of a full-grown man, about five feet, six inches in height, and of slender build, as are all Queensland natives, without exception.

"Come, bear a hand, Aubrey, and we will lower him into the cart," said Mortimer.

Bear a hand, indeed. I don't think I could have touched the thing for double its weight in gold. All I could do was to stand trembling, and with teeth chattering.

Perceiving my utter inability to assist him, Mortimer, with a growl, attempted to perform the feat unaided, and found the mummy so light, that, having put forth all his strength when not a quarter of it was needed, he overbalanced himself, and, with his ghastly burthen, fell into the bottom of the cart.

It was well for him that he did so, for a second later a long



"A Queensland mummy—a sun-dried native."—Page 138.

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reed-like spear struck and sank into the bark hammock just where my partner's head and shoulders had been as he hauled out its grim tenant, whilst a second missile grazed my own shoulder, and drew from me a cry of mingled pain and terror.

A whoop; a war-cry, half shriek, half yell, startled the silence of the forest. Whizz! whizz! whizz! came the spears. The night seemed to be full of dusky faces and brandished arms; and then something or other descended with a crack upon my head, and I fell as though sinking into the earth.

When I regained my senses, of which I had been deprived by a blow from a club or waddy, I found myself lying on the grass in a little dell having a water hole in its midst, and surrounded by trees of enormous girth and height, under one of which I noticed our donkey and cart, whilst my unfortunate partner lay bound with green withies underneath another, with his head all bloody.

This was revealed to me by a circle of blazing fires, and close in the rear of one a lot of women and old men were squatted cross-legged on the grass, making a horrible noise with the jaw bones of some kind of animal, which they clashed together, seemingly, with all their might, whilst, with the shrillest of voices, they kept up a really ear-splitting accompaniment.

Whilst I wondered whether it was our funeral dirge which they were chanting as a kind of preliminary ceremony to the cutting of our throats, either the rustling of countless leaves, or the pattering of naked feet, attracted my attention, coming from another direction, and a minute later, rushing through the interstices between the watch-fires, and in many instances leaping over the flames, came, evidently, the warriors of the tribe, yelling, gesticulating, and brandishing spears,

boomerangs, waddies, and nulla-nullas, the foam flying in every direction from their parted lips, and their long matted elf locks fluttering with every motion, like intertangled and writhing serpents.

They were quite naked ; but some had their bodies and limbs painted in broad stripes of red and blue with some kind of coarse pigment, and others had stuck in their hair bright colored parrot and cockatoo feathers.

They were evidently in a state of intense excitement, and it all seemed like a hideous nightmare to one who had always been accustomed to look down upon our aboriginal population, owing to the sorry specimens of the race I had seen in New South Wales, dressed in the cast off habiliments of civilization, journeying in twos or threes about the country begging, and looking like the meanest of Jim Crows.

These savages, on the contrary, resembled those that I had read of in the works of Cooper, Aimard and Mayne Reid, being evidently quite as fierce, whilst infinitely more hideous of aspect.

But what dancers they were—how lightning swift in their movements, how wonderfully agile in their leaps and bounds. Sometimes their antics would resemble such as a troop of drunken gorillas might have indulged in, but in the twinkling of an eye the grotesque and absurd would change to the horrible, the blood-curdling, the Satanic ; and they would leap and plunge, twirl and spin, brandishing their weapons, and clashing them together by turns, whilst their eyes rolled and glared, their great nostrils quivered, and the froth churned up by their strong teeth flew from their mouths in showers.

I regarded them now with the most abject terror, for I had by this time made up my mind that they were working them-



"They seemed to get very angry . . . and immediately brought the mummy over, and set it up in front of me."—Page 145.

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selves up to the requisite pitch of fury for torturing and slaughtering my partner and myself, and to judge from the woe-begone expression of his face, such was also his opinion of the state of affairs. .

We could hold no communication together, for I did not dare venture to creep towards him, even though I was unbound, but his countenance was quite sufficient index to his thoughts, and I could read them like a printed book. It was very far from comforting reading though.

The war dance, or *corrobboree*, was not succeeded by our slaughter, however, for on its ceasing the warriors commenced to hold a great palaver, or *yabber, yabber*, at the end of which they took the mummy out of the cart, and whilst two of them held it in an upright position immediately in front of Mortimer, others proceeded to address him in loud and excited tones, and, as far as I could make out, seemed to be urging him to do something or other to it.

Poor Mortimer evidently strove very hard to understand them, but without succeeding in the least, and their dumb pantomime was, I could plainly see, equally unintelligible to him.

They seemed to get very angry at this, and immediately brought the mummy over, and set it up in front of me, going through the same programme of speech and gesticulations; but, as may be imagined, I could no more make out what they meant than could Mortimer, whereat they looked very vexed, though not nearly so angry as they had seemed to be with him, and straightway taking the hideous thing close over against him again, they drove two stakes into the earth, and attached it to them by the arms in an upright position, so that the stony glare of its solitary eye was fixed on my wretched

partner, whom they next threatened by pointing at his body, and next at the weapons they carried, thirdly at me, fourthly at the mummy, and lastly at the sky; after which they raised a great shouting and yelling, and after brandishing their weapons anew, they separated, and went to lie down around the fires, where they soon seemed to fall asleep; indeed, their snores became convincing proof that such was the case.

I now began to think what it could all mean, and at once came to the conclusion that Mortimer and myself were to be slain on the morrow if we didn't do something by or to the mummy during the night.

Perhaps they take us to be medicine men, and think we can restore the dead man to life, or (and here I recollected the universal aboriginal belief that the white settlers are their own dead in a second state of existence) that we have the power to make him like ourselves, and in default of our working this miracle they will, for our supposed stubbornness, *make us like unto him*, barring the change of colour—a wonderfully easy task.

Prior to lying down they had unharnessed the donkey, and driven it off into the bush, and some of them had also made Mortimer's bonds more secure; but to me they had paid little or no regard, perhaps thinking that I had lost so much blood from the waddy stroke over the head that I should be too faint and weak to move.

It is true my hair was all clotted with blood, and I daresay I looked as white as a sheet; but, happily, I had still a little strength left in me, and a small portion of my wits as well, for, had it been otherwise, I don't think we should ever have got out of the awful scrape in which we were involved.

How we did get out of it must form the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER V.

I TURN OUT A GHOST-MAKER ON A LARGE SCALE.

I HAD for a long while nothing to do but lie still and think. Had it been otherwise, the scheme might never have occurred to me, to which we owed our deliverance, and which to be brief, was to induce our captors to believe that we were men-makers, or ghost-makers, or at the very least, potent and powerful magicians, through the medium of our magic-lantern.

It was just the very apparatus to impose upon their simple credulity with, and the enormous breadth of snow white trunks that many of the surrounding gum trees afforded, would show off the pictures as well as any sheet or expanse of stretched canvas, aye, even better, for as the slide was passed slowly on, the figures would seem to pass round to the back of the tree, and in that manner become lost to view. To render the plot successful, however, I should have to wait until the various fires had burnt out and it was quite dark, and my chief doubt was, could I then find and arrange everything that was requisite.

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How I longed to approach Mortimer, in order to tell him my plans, but I dared not risk it, for some of the savages might be sleeping weasel-fashion, with one eye open, and in such a case I should be detected, and if I escaped being speared or waddied outright, ten chances to one I should be bound for greater security, and then my grand scheme would perforce be at an end.

On the other hand the cart stood much nearer to me, and I could approach it without passing in such close proximity to the savages as in crossing over to Mortimer, on all which accounts I determined to keep my own counsel and depend entirely on myself in what I was about to undertake.

How slow the time seemed to pass and the fires to smoulder down. The birds of the night, and chief amongst them our old friends the *laughing jackass* and the "*More pork*" were noisy enough, whilst the locusts buzzed in the tree branches overhead like the ceaseless distant whirr of machinery. Occasionally too the howl of the warrigal, or Australian wild dog, would sound shrill and indescribably doleful in the distance, whilst near by, the sleeping natives snored through their great wide flat noses, and sometimes one of them in his dreams would throw up and brandish a naked ebony arm, and give half utterance to a war whoop, which I was always fearful would wake the rest.

It did not, however, for they were sound sleepers, even though not one of their number was there who did not grasp some kind of weapon in one or other of his hands, so as to have it ready at the very instant of his waking, and, as in nearly every instance, they were of a missile character, this fact did not add to my composure.

Still, as it was nothing venture nothing win, and our very

lives seemed to depend on the success of my scheme, I was nothing daunted.

At last the moment arrived when it struck me that it would be comparatively safe to put it into execution.

The fires had sunk down to a dull smouldering glow, and everything was plunged into the most gloomy obscurity, for so thick was the tree foliage overhead that only a steady star or two out of the glittering hosts that stud an Australian heaven could show us its diminutive light.

With a brief, but fervent prayer, therefore, that success might crown my efforts, I crept cautiously upon all fours towards the cart, and just as noiselessly clambered into and crouched down at the bottom of it, preparatory to setting to work. My task was more difficult than I had imagined it would be, for the lamp wanted oil, and the wick required trimming, all of which I had to do in the dark.

Then I had also to fix up something for the lantern to stand steadily on, in effecting which, I upset the oil can, and knocked over a plate, and for a moment my hair stood almost on end with terror, lest I had prematurely wakened up our savage captors.

How relieved I felt upon discovering that such was not the case.

But now I had to select the best slides out of the box full, for I did not want to commence with the shipwreck scene, which, as doubtless not one of the savages had ever seen the sea, would not have been understood. No, I wanted two especially out of our at least three score, one of them representing James Moril being welcomed and kindly treated by the Queensland blacks, and the other depicting him leading them on to victory against a hostile tribe.

I hoped that our captors would take this as a supernatural hint, that they had better use us well likewise, and I thought it extremely probable that they would so accept it, but then to select these special slides. I had to strike a light, a risk that caused my blood to run cold again, and—where on earth was the match-box ?

I groped about in search of the box for at least five minutes ere I found it. When, as the matches were happily, silent striking, I kindled one and lighted the lantern lamp, taking care that the polished reflector thereof was not turned towards our sleeping foes.

Placing the lamp in the very bottom of the cart, and covering it as much as possible with my body, I selected my two favorite slides, and half-a-dozen more to back them up, if required, and then I quickly clapped the lamp into its proper place inside the lantern, closed the door, pushed slide No. 1 into proper position, took aim at the trunk of the biggest gum tree, guessed as nearly as possible the proper focus, and then knew that I had only to remove the brass protector at the end of the lens, in order to make my *ghosts walk*.

The only question now to be solved, was, could they walk to any purpose, and I own that I felt far from comfortable, as it suddenly occurred to me that wizards weren't always rewarded, and that even in civilized and Christian countries they had sometimes been burnt instead.

It was not a time for irresolution, however, and my movements were hastened and heralded at this juncture by one of the most terrific brays that our donkey Lion had ever been known to indulge in.

I doubt if even a man-eating tiger could have emitted a more awful medley of sounds, which had the effect of waking

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up the black fellows in evidently the wildest conceivable state of alarm, for though their poor foolish bush bird could bray in its way, it was only as the squeak of a child's wooden penny trumpet as compared with the roar of the great fog-horn at Labrador when in full blast.

The black fellows sprang to their feet, wide awake and terror-stricken. They had evidently never heard a sound at all resembling it before. They ran against each other, and they threw their arms about, and made the most uncouth and guttural noises deep down in their throats, whilst from somewhere in my rear came the shriek of women and squalling of children, in answer to all which mingled sounds Lion very naturally brayed again, and with still stronger emphasis.

At the same instant I removed the brass covering of the magic lantern lens, and a dozen seeming additional savages, with the wild white man standing in their midst, appeared as though standing close against the milk-white trunk of an enormous gum-tree, whilst, at the same time, the lantern directed what looked like an enormous fiery eye full upon them out of the darkness of the bush.

They didn't see the fiery eye at first, for the gaze of one and all was fixed upon the seeming accession to their numbers.

They shouted to the strangers, but received no answer. They then "yabber yabbered" amongst themselves, and one at last threw a spear at the tree, and though it seemed to transfix one of the forms there was no cry, nor even the slightest movement as a result.

The live savages now recoiled from their shadowy brethren, and clustered close together, as though for mutual support, whereupon I moved the slide on so that the figures seemed to pass round the tree to the rear, and immediately substituted

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the battle scene, and as the trunk would not take it all in, I paused when I came to the two central figures, representing James Moril overcoming and throttling, with his bare hands, a gigantic aboriginal chief.

Two or three yelemens were now immediately cast at Moril, but though they all seemed to stick in him, one even apparently entering his very brain, he went on with the throttling business just as coolly as though nothing had happened to him.

This was altogether too much for our black friends. Seized with a wild panic they broke and fled, some shrieking with terror, as on wheeling round they caught sight in turn of the magic lantern's apparent fiery eye.

Like madmen they scampered off into the darkness of the bush, their womenkind and children seeming to immediately follow their example.

Directly their retreating footsteps and their yellings ceased to be audible in the distance, I fished a knife out of the cart, and, making straight for my partner, cut his bonds, and set him free.

"You managed that capitally, Aubrey," said he; "and now you shall take a handful of oats, and go into the bush, and catch the donkey, whilst I get the mummy into the cart, and stretch my limbs, which are pretty considerably cramped."

I thought that he might have been a trifle warmer in his praises, and in his thanks as well; but it was just like him, as also was his sending me into the bush after the donkey, for Mortimer would never poke even his little finger into the slightest jeopardy as long as anybody else's whole body could be used for the purpose.

However, after saying to him, "I'd keep the ghosts walking,

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f I was you, for fear that some of them should come back," I started off, and soon caught *Lion*, unhoppled though he was; and after I had brought him back, and harnessed him to the cart, Mortimer sitting down smoking the while, and continually complaining how stiff his limbs were, he condescended to clamber up therein, and to superintend the lantern, whilst I drove, picking out the way as I best could.

There's not many a colonial boy who can't steer by the stars, and knowing that our proper route lay in a nor'-nor'-easterly direction, I kept as close to it as the nature of the ground would allow, which was often of such a character that I had to dismount, and walk by *Lion's* head for long miles at a stretch.

Mortimer meanwhile sat or reclined beside the mummy, and in charge of the magic lantern, with the brass cap over the lens (for we did not care to show a light), yet with everything ready for raising ghosts at a moment's notice, should they be required for our safety's sake, and to frighten away pursuing black fellows.

It was by no means an agreeable journey, for we might have been speared, or waddied, or boomeranged at any instant, and part of the way lay, for at least three miles, through a mountain gorge, with a sheer precipice on one side of us, and an abyss of unknown depth on the other, whilst the rocky roadway could not have been more than nine feet wide.

This gloomy pass traversed, however, we reached open bush, in which I could venture to ride again, and a few hours later the rising sun showed us something actually in the shape of a road, and, about a mile ahead, a settler's hut, standing in the midst of a little tobacco plantation, and, could I believe

my eyes, a patch of monster pine-apples and melons adjoining it as well.

We were hospitably received, and well treated. I ate melons and pine-apples to my heart's content, and, what was a far greater treat, had half-a-dozen hours' delicious sleep on a straw mattress, and a cup of coffee and plate of hot damper-cake on waking up.

We stayed in our comfortable quarters until the great heat of the day was past, and then we resumed our journey; but, happily, reached Rockhampton without any further adventures.



CHAPTER VI.

I RETURN, LIKE THE REPENTANT PRODIGAL, TO MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

ROCKHAMPTON was but a repetition of Brisbane and Ipswich, so far as both our public and private life was concerned. The mummy was certainly a draw, but not so great a one as my partner had anticipated; yet, being of a very sanguine temperament, he would often observe—"Wait until we get to Sydney and Melbourne, and *then* see how it will rake the money into our pockets."

But I listened to him with little interest, for I had by this time firmly made up my mind that immediately on reaching the former capital I would at once go home, and even at the cost of a whacking, return to a life of steadiness and respectability, for I had for long grown to believe in the truth of the proverb that rolling stones gather no moss.

I was never a very good hand at concealing my intentions, and Mortimer must have found out this one of mine, and determined to defeat it, for he all at once made up his mind to go on to Melbourne without touching at Sydney, and selected a steamboat for our passage (*The Rangatira*), which made the voyage direct. I was thus carried close past my home, and 577 miles beyond it, and at Melbourne my master (for he was, in fact, my master, though he always stuck out that we were partners) hired a hall in Great Bourke Street, and declared that he should exhibit there for six months.

I must not forget to tell you that at Rockhampton Mortimer persuaded a runaway Fidgee slave, a lad of about seventeen, to join our party, and directly he had secured the Melbourne Hall he lodged him in a little den on the premises, and dyed

his abundance of black hair red, put enormous gilt rings in his ears, and painted little dull red spots all over his body, like you see in a skate fish. In this manner he at last possessed "a wild boy from the far interior," and in conjunction with the mummy and the panorama, hoped to drive a good trade, and so he did up to the time when I left him, which happened as follows :—

Seeing that he could get on without me, and that, in point of fact, I was only a very hard-working servant without wages, I told him that I had resolved to go home, and asked him for my money-box and its contents, which had been nearly £5; but he told me, with a laugh, that that had been all spent, long ago, and that if I attempted to leave him "in such a shabby manner" he'd have me pursued, and brought back as a *runaway apprentice*. How I wonder now that I could have been afraid of such a threat.

I *was* so afraid of it at the time, however, that I ran away from my partner—yes, sneaked off in the middle of the night, and with only eighteenpence in my pocket, actually walked overland, the entire 577 miles, to Sydney, begging my meals as I went, and camping out in the bush of a night.

It took me exactly a month to get from capital to capital, and, as may be imagined, my feet were on the ground by the time that I had accomplished it.

How didn't I lose my way the reader may wonder. Well, the telegraph ran the entire distance, and the white posts were an all sufficient guide, and instead of a whacking on reaching home I received a most kindly welcome, and, in lieu of the fatted calf, we had my favorite dainty, an enormous pumpkin pie for dinner.



A Home in the Farøe Islands.

CHAPTER I.

IT was towards the middle of February, and yet there was skating. The Christmas had been a green one, and the dicky birds thought that it was going to be a great year for them. Plenty of fresh meat, no frozen-up worms, lots of insects in the air, and spring seeds just going to be sown, for a change of diet till the fruit should begin to ripen. Parent birds had, under these circumstances, given their consent to a great many marriages, which, in ordinary seasons, would have been somewhat deferred; and long before Saint Valentine's Day nests were built, and family arrangements settled for the season. But winter had only missed one train, and come on by a later, and now the ground was iron, birds were dependent on charitable crumbs, and the berries they could find in hedges, and eggs were added.

A HOME IN THE FARÖE ISLANDS.

So the interior of a small parlour at Mortlake was snug and warm, and Mrs. Woadley felt glad of the shelter, and did not repine so much as usual at the humble dimensions of her present home, which she ordinarily characterised as "pokey"; and, in truth, four people did crowd the apartment rather.

There were four people in it now—Mrs. Woadley, a widow, whose dress smelt very strongly of black dye when she sat near the fire, which she did at present, though, for the matter of that, everybody in the room sat near the fire when there was one, it was impossible to do otherwise. Her hair was very light, and the expression of her face care-worn. Clara Woadley, her daughter, a quiet, unobtrusive girl of sixteen, was knitting stockings. A tall, broad, ruddy man, with a big beard, whose clothes were evidently made by a country tailor, and were calculated to resist rough weather rather than to lounge about Bond Street in, seemed to fill quite half the apartment, and to want air. His name was John Thompson, and he came from Stromoe, the principal island of the Farøe group. Mrs. Woadley had been a Miss Thompson, and this was her brother.

The fourth of the family party was a boy of fifteen, Joseph Woadley, only son of the widow. His disposition and habits may be best intimated by the fact that he was never called Joe, but always Joseph. Not that he was a milksop by nature, or at all puny or delicate; but his mother had brought him up like a girl, and he had never left home, having been educated at a day school.

His father, the late Mr. Woadley, had been a shipping agent, and, for the greater part of his life, well off. His business was to get ships and crews, and send goods for merchants to different parts of the world at so much a ton,

and for many years all went smoothly enough. But at length trade began to grow slacker and slacker, and at the end of one year he found himself a loser.

Still he kept on, in hopes of things coming round again, and so his savings became absorbed ; and just as the tide was turning, and prospects began to look a little brighter, a heavy package slipped from a crane over his head while he was superintending the lading of a vessel, and put a summary close to all his trials and struggles.

He left enough money to pay all his debts and bury him, but after all that was done there was very little indeed for his widow and children.

Poor Mrs. Woadley was very nelpless. She had always been accustomed to comfort, if not luxury, with a good house, and plenty of servants, and a liberal allowance for house-keeping and pocket-money. She was not a very inquiring lady, and did not care to know about the nature of things. What had been, always ought to be, she thought, and if she did not get her usual income there must be fraud, cruelty, and injustice somewhere.

"Of course they take advantage of a helpless widow," she cried, but never defined who *they* were. Fortunately, her daughter Clara was a very sensible and practical girl, quiet and unassuming withal, and as good as gold.

John Thompson came to his sister's rescue as soon as the accident became known to him ; and now offered to take the boy off her hands entirely. He was a man of various occupations, a shepherd, a fisherman, a trader, a shipowner, a birdcatcher. If Joseph liked to come and live with him he would make a man of him, and put him in the way of earning bread and cheese at any rate, however bad his luck might be.

A HOME IN THE FARØE ISLANDS.

She was dreadfully alarmed at first at the idea of his going away from her, but when her brother pointed out that it was not necessary, as she and Clara could come and live at Stromoe too, her fears rose to positive terror. She could not quite realise the possibility of residing anywhere fifty miles from London, though it was just comprehensible that, if the welfare of her children demanded it, she might exist in some other large town. But dwellers in the country, "amongst the cocks and hens," seemed to her mind a different order of beings, partaking largely of the nature of pigs, sheep and bullocks. As for being transported to a distant island somewhere in the North Sea, it was too horrible a thought even for nightmare. Death or even the workhouse would be far preferable to such a fate. And then Clara. It was not altogether opposed to the nature of things that boys should live in wild places and lapse into partial savagery, but for a girl to be buried alive in a place where there was no chance of her winning a high-class husband; a desert where even baronets were unknown—good gracious! she hoped that she knew her duties as a mother better than to think of such a thing.

But after several sleepless nights and tearful days she began to see that it might be her duty to let Joseph go, and as her brother could not stop in England much longer, it was positively necessary to make up her mind this afternoon.

"You don't know what it is to be a mother, John," she said.

"That is true," replied Mr. Thompson, "though as a father who is fond of his brats himself and has watched the ways of his wife with them, I can make a shrewd sort of a guess. I know that it is hard for you to part with the boy, and also



1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered.

2. The second step is to gather relevant information and data.

3. The third step is to analyze the information and data.

4. The fourth step is to develop a solution or answer.

5. The fifth step is to implement the solution or answer.

6. The sixth step is to evaluate the results of the solution or answer.

7. The seventh step is to communicate the results of the solution or answer.

8. The eighth step is to monitor the results of the solution or answer.

9. The ninth step is to revise the solution or answer if necessary.

10. The tenth step is to conclude the process.

11. The eleventh step is to document the results of the solution or answer.

12. The twelfth step is to share the results of the solution or answer.

13. The thirteenth step is to reflect on the process.

14. The fourteenth step is to learn from the experience.

15. The fifteenth step is to apply the lessons learned to future problems.



Ben George, London

ON BOARD THE "LIVELY SUSAN."

that you would like him to wear tight boots and kid gloves, and get his living with his head rather than his hands. But, unfortunately, I cannot help you in that direction. I only know my own business. If you can do better for him, or have other friends, well and good."

"I am very grateful to you for all your kindness, John, and whatever I should have done without it I cannot tell. I know no one else who would help me, and if I wish that Joseph could have been put into a quiet office, it is because I fear that he is delicate, and if he were to be sea-sick or to get his feet wet, I cannot think what would happen. And he is a timid boy, and not fit to catch sharks and whales, or fight pirates, or sleep on the top of masts."

"He looks strong enough," said Mr. Thompson; "and he shall not be urged to take part in any dangerous sport or work that he does not like. He will live with my own lads, and I can promise you that they will be kind to their cousin. What do you say, Joseph?"

"I should like to learn to support myself, and not be a burden on my mother, Uncle John, and I should like to see her and Clara sometimes, if a ship was coming to England, and I could be useful coming in it. As for one sort of life more than another, I have no choice until I have tried; and I don't suppose, mother dear, that I am very different from other boys. Of course I am sorry to go away, but even if we were rich I should have to do that."

"Well said, my boy," cried his uncle. "I daresay we shall be able to manage a trip to England for you now and then. But since you have made up your mind, we had better go and see about your rig out. The *Lively Susan* sails on Saturday, so we have no time to waste."

There is generally something pleasant about a change, even if we rather dread it, and Joseph enjoyed going about with his uncle, and trying on strange garments. He hardly knew himself in a serge suit, flannel shirt, thick boots, and tarpauling hat. And as for the waterproof coat and leggings and sou'-wester, which were provided against rough weather, he could not recognise himself at all when he tried them on before a glass, but thought he had been turned by magic into somebody else.

Saturday came, and the parting was a sad business, which we need not dwell upon. Partings—whether from teeth, friends or money, are very terrible, especially at first. We get over it better after a good deal of experience, but there is always a pang. It would be difficult to say whether Mrs. Woadley and Clara, in the little house at Mortlake, or Joseph, in the cupboard which was to be his dwelling-place for a few days, felt the bitterest grief. But Joseph had distractions. Even going to bed was one. Somebody else slung his hammock for him, but he had to get into it himself. At the first attempt he shot over on the other side, and practised a header on to the hard boards, which made him forget mother and sister, and everything except his own nose, which was in agony. When that organ stopped bleeding, he had another try; sitting in the middle and drawing his legs up cautiously. And when he did get settled, he found it very comfortable, and soon fell to sleep—a pleasanter fall than the other. When he woke he wondered where he was, and got another tumble before he remembered; but took a sitter not a header this time, and made nothing bleed. Dressing was rather difficult, because the floor was all on a slant; and while he had one leg in his trousers and one out, it suddenly became level, and



"At the first attempt he shot over on the other side."—Page 162.

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then heeled over on the *other* side, whereby he lost his balance again.

When at last he got on deck he found that the Thames had become very broad, and that the vessel was skimming along the surface of it before a crisp fresh breeze. Uncle John caught sight of him presently, and asked him cheerily what sort of night he had had, laughed at his misadventures with the hammock, and proceeded to point out objects of interest on the nearest shore, and to explain the meaning of the different buoys which marked out the channels. He had not disturbed the lad, wishing him to sleep through the confusion of starting; but now the last item of cargo had been neatly stowed away, and the crew were almost entirely sober.

The *Lively Susan* was a large schooner, and it was beautiful to see how gracefully she bowed over as the freshening breeze filled her large sails, and sent her through the rippling water. The morning air was exhilarating, moreover, combined as it was with bright sunshine, and Joseph forgot to fret. He even began to feel very hungry, and was glad when his uncle summoned him to breakfast.

"I think that I shall like the sea, Uncle John," said he a few hours later, after he had been interesting himself about the sails, ropes, spars, steering apparatus, and other mysteries.

"I hope you will, my lad," said Mr. Thompson, "but it is not always so pleasant as this. Wait till you have tried a gale on a winter's night before you come to a conclusion. Not but what there is a pleasure in that too, so long as your ship is all right and there is plenty of sea-room. See yonder; that is the Reculvers you have heard about."

But another object of interest soon engrossed Joseph. They were now well out of the river, and the surface of the

A HOME IN THE FARØE ISLANDS.

water undulated, so that the schooner rose and fell, instead of cleaving her way smoothly. It was delightful to lean over the bows and watch the waves as they were dashed into showers of spray which glittered in the sunshine, and the motion produced an exhilarating tickling in the sides, like that felt in a swing, during the descent. But after a couple of hours or so this ceased to please, and he grew rather giddy, while, without being at all sleepy, he felt a constant desire to yawn. When dinner was announced he did not feel that readiness for it which he had exhibited at breakfast, and he had hardly eaten a mouthful before he had to go on deck again hurriedly.

"Never mind, boy, fight it;" said his uncle. "You get over sickness in half the time if you move about and don't give in."

The wind rose, and the *Lively Susan* became very lively indeed, but Joseph resisted the desire to lie in his hammock manfully, and on the third day he was convalescent. By the time they sighted the Farøe group he had almost got his sea legs, for they did not make one stretch of it, but touched at Aberdeen, and again at the Shetland Islands, where Uncle John had business; but at length, on going on deck one morning, Joseph saw a frowning mass of rock rising out of the ocean on their lee.

"There is your future home, my boy," said his uncle: "rather appropriate that Joseph should go to Farøe, eh?"

"By-the-bye, uncle, I never thought to ask, but do these islands belong to England?"

"Oh, no, to Denmark. The name is Danish, *Faar—Oen*, sheep—lands. England held them for about twenty years at the beginning of the century, but that was only a temporary business. We talk English at home, but most of the people

don't, so you will have to pick up the lingo. Our house is in a valley on the other side of that queer-shaped rock, something like a bear. We shall be in in about an hour."

Joseph wondered how they were ever to *get* in. The schooner was rushing along with several reefs in the sails, under a steep wall of black rock, which rose perpendicularly out of the sea, and against which the waves could be seen dashing themselves into spray.

To land anywhere seemed an impossibility. But while he yet gazed and wondered, a projecting mass was turned, the helm was put up, and they shot directly towards a cleft in the dark barrier, which thus became suddenly visible. Nice steering was required, and a stranger without a native pilot might come off badly, for there was a whirlpool near the entrance, which had turned many an unwary vessel from her course, and hurled her on the cruel rocks. But the passage was as familiar to John Thompson and his crew as the doorway of their own houses, and gliding in without accident, the schooner was speedily in the smooth water of a land-locked bay, and not long after was moored to a most civilised quay.

A sturdy blue-eyed lad was waiting for them, with a broad grin on his weather-beaten complexion.

"Ah, Reuben," cried the father, "how did the wool sell?"

"All right, father, at the price you left word."

"And the sheep?"

"There's nothing the matter with them. Christian is looking after them."

"That's well. And the puffin, are they laying yet?"

"Yes; it's an early season, we can begin catching in a few days."

A HOME IN THE FARÖE ISLANDS.

"Aye, I thought this wind would bring them. And how's your mother?"

"All right. She knows the *Lively Susan's* in, and is getting dinner ready. Is this cousin Joseph, father?"

"Aye, aye. This is my second son, Joseph. The eldest is out fishing, but this one is about your age. Show him home, Reuben; I'll be up in half-an-hour."

"How do you do, cousin?" said Reuben, when they were walking off together. "Do you like puffin catching?"

"I don't know," said Joseph; "I never tried."

"No puffins in London?"

"No."

"Nor guillemote?"

"No."

"Nor whales?"

"No."

"Why, whatever do you do out there? it must be a very dull country—London."

"People sell things in shops, and do sums, and write letters, and all that. It's all streets, you know, and the sea is many miles off. There's a river, but there are no whales in it; though I have heard of a porpoise being caught occasionally."

"Ah; I had sooner live here. How do you like the look of this place?"

"It's very grand," said Joseph, desirous of being both truthful and civil. "Rather rocky, perhaps. I suppose the trees are further inland."

"No; there are no trees. But I have seen trees. I went last year to Norway, and there is corn there, and vegetables, and things."

"Have you none here?"

"No; you see it blows so hard sometimes. We get those things from other countries."

"Then what do the sheep live on?"

"Grass; oh, there's lots of grass."

Thus chatting they went over a low hill into a sheltered nook where the house stood. A substantial, comfortable-looking dwelling it was, and its mistress, who came to the door to bid Joseph welcome, was substantial and comfortable-looking likewise. She was Danish, but had learned to speak English, and made her husband's nephew feel at home at once. Her idea of life was that it was the business of men to work, get wet, and be very hungry, and it was the business of women to see that their beds were comfortable, to dry them, mend their clothes, and feed them. And she brought her sons and daughters up with similar simple notions.

It was for a very short time that Joseph could be said to be among strangers, for he felt at home with the whole family almost at once, they were so hearty and simple.

His cousins, indeed, could not help laughing at his ignorance of what to them seemed such very natural and every day matters; but it was all in good nature, and Joseph was very willing to be instructed, and anxious to make himself useful. At first he was principally employed in looking after the sheep, but one evening he was asked if he would like to go puffin catching next day. It was Gustavus, the eldest boy, a sturdy young fellow of seventeen, who put the question, and he added—

"You will spoil a net or two before you get into the way of it; but that does not matter. We have nothing to do but mend them, sometimes, in the bad weather."

A HOME IN THE FARŪE ISLANDS.

"I should like to learn very much," said Joseph. "I suppose we start very early."


"Oh, no; the puffin does not go out for his fly before ten or eleven. If we start at half-past nine it will be early enough."

At the time named Gustavus, Reuben, Christian, who was only thirteen, and Joseph, set out, laden with nets fixed at the end of poles, and walked some two miles to the edge of the cliffs. Joseph did not like heights. When he had been taken to the Monument or the whispering gallery of St. Paul's it had been a painful treat to him, and now he shrank from the cliffs, and it even turned him giddy to see his cousins running about so close to the brink. But they thought nothing of it, and he was ashamed to show his fear, which, however, most people as little used to such experiences as he was would have shared; for the face of the cliff ran sheer down to the sea, hundreds of feet below, and, indeed, in some places it was undermined by the action of the waves, so that the brow beetled over. There was a stiff breeze, and the bare idea of his cap being blown over, and his feeling an impetus to start after it, made him break out into a cold sweat.

The provoking thing was that his cousins thought nothing of it. They stood on the very brink, and looked carelessly down, and were perfectly incapable of appreciating the heroism displayed by the novice in not lying down flat and digging his nails into the ground.

"While I am four feet from the edge," he reasoned with himself, "if I stumbled and fell I should not roll over." And soon he got a little more composed.

CHAPTER II.

“OU had better watch us for a bit,” said Gustavus, “and see how we arrange it before you try. The puffins are beginning to fly now.”

And so they were. First by hundreds, then by thousands they flashed at a tremendous rate along the cliff; then circling round, and soaring a little against the wind, on they came again, turning the bright day to twilight as they passed between the fowlers and the sun.

Gustavus took a pole, with a net attached to it, and calmly seated himself on the edge of the precipice, with his legs dangling over. His brothers separated, and took up similar positions, at intervals of about a hundred yards; but Joseph squatted on the ground a little behind Gustavus, and watched him.

Presently, as the puffins passed, up went his pole, and he had one in the net, which he quickly killed, and threw behind him. Joseph picked it up, and saw that it had a black back, a white breast, and a red bill.

In a minute he had another ; then a third, a fourth, as fast as he could catch and kill them. The sportsman who only seeks his pleasure may grow weary of slaughter, but when what you catch represents *money*, you never have too much of it.

After awhile Joseph got excited, and longed to try it himself. It looked easy enough to catch the birds, so he took one of the nets, which, with its handle, resembled somewhat a butterfly-net, or a landing-net, and sought a perch of his own. He still disliked the precipice, but desire for the sport enabled him to master his fears sufficiently to sit like the others, at the very edge. After letting the birds flit over him for awhile, he shot his pole up, as he had seen Gustavus do it, and tried to snare a puffin, which, however, *went clean through the net*, such was the velocity of its flight.

Gathering his legs up gingerly, and wriggling backwards, Joseph retreated from his giddy position, and going to the place where the spare nets were, fitted a new one to his pole, and went once more to watch his cousin.

"Well, how did you get on?" asked the latter.

"Not at all. The net would no more hold the puffin than a cobweb would."

"Ah, that is because you met it coming. You must clap the net over the bird as it is going from you. The flight is coming round again ; now just watch."

Joseph had another lesson, and then went back to his former perch, which he approached with more confidence than before, though still he did not half like it ; and the sight of the waves below gave him a dizziness and a shuddering horror every now and then, which only intentness on the sport enabled him to overcome. He thrust his pole up

timidly, half expecting the movement to topple him over, and this, of course, was against his success. Failure, however, provoked him, and made him bolder, and at last he had a victim fluttering in his net. He did not much like wringing the pretty thing's neck ; but these things have to be done. Even lambs must be slaughtered if we are to eat them cold, with mint sauce, and we are not prepared to give up that luxury, though lambs are such innocent little dears, and play at king of the castle so prettily.

So Joseph strangled his puffin, and set about snaring another. This, after many futile efforts, he accomplished ; and then, after awhile he caught a third, by which time he could look down the face of the precipice without caring a jot, a feat of which, with some justice, he felt proud. Every man ought to conquer the dread of heights and sea-sickness. It is almost always possible to do so, and they are ignoble weaknesses.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the birds left off flying, and could be distinguished, little specks, floating on the sea below, rising and falling with the waves. So then the fowlers withdrew from their dizzy positions, and proceeded to count their victims, and tie them together in bundles. Gustavus had taken a hundred and three, Reuben sixty, little Christian twenty-four, and Joseph nine. He was rather ashamed of his small contribution, but the others thought it very good indeed, and when they reached home his Uncle John was quite surprised at his prowess. He had not expected him to catch one at all on the first occasion ; while Mrs. Thompson told him, with a merry laugh, that at that rate he would soon earn his keep.

All which cheered and pleased Joseph mightily, but he felt

very tired; his arms and shoulders ached very much indeed, and a little spot in the centre of his back felt red hot. When he got up next morning he was so stiff he could hardly move, and had to content himself with lighter work. The next day was Sunday, and by Monday morning he was as fresh as a two-year-old, and, the morning being favourable, he had another try at puffin catching. This time he dreaded the precipice less, handled his net better, caught twice as many puffins, and did not feel so fatigued after it. Before the season was over he grew quite a dab at it, and took his seventy or eighty in a day.

He also learned how to drive, doctor and otherwise tend sheep; to splice and knot; to take in reefs in sails; to row and to steer. Also, in the long stormy evenings, to sew and to net; but not much of this, for being the best reader of the family, he was told off, as a general rule, to the duty of reading aloud while the others worked.

Sea sickness he had quite conquered, and for the dread of precipitous places, he thought that he had pretty well got over that too, but he found that he was mistaken when the guillemots arrived, and he went *figling*.

These birds came in enormous numbers about the end of January. They were heavy lumbering fowls, and could not fly rapidly like the puffins.

"It is easy to catch *them*, I should think," Joseph said to Reuben one morning, as they stood on the brink of a cliff, and looked down on the innumerable guillemots lining every ledge of rock in sight. They stood or sat in rows, sitting and standing being apparently the same position, and if one was disturbed she tumbled off her perch nearly into the sea before she recovered herself, and commenced a weary struggle upwards to her old place.

"Why, yes," said Reuben, "you can net them easily enough if you keep in a boat and get someone up a-top to disturb them; for they come fluttering down close to you. But we never do that; it scares the lot away from the place."

"How stupid they look."

"Yes, they are called the Foolish Guillemot. But they know the nastiest places to get at, and stick to them."

"I don't see them coming out of any holes as the puffins do."

"No, they never build nests; don't you see their eggs? There, on that nearest ledge, where some of them have flown down for a bit."

"I see!" cried Joseph. "Has each of them got an egg like that under her, on the bare rock?"

"Most of them; and the queer thing is, suppose you fired a gun, and frightened the whole lot of them away, when they came back every one would know its own egg."

"How do you know?"

"Father told me."

That was conclusive in the family; which was as much to the credit of John Thompson as of his children.

"They are not so foolish as they look then, if every bird can remember the exact square inch she was perched upon with all those thousands close together. But how do you take them, if you must not scare them?"

"We figla for them."

"What is that?"

"Go over by a rope, and scoop them up in a net, for if you go quietly they won't fly away. But you will see in a day or two. I own I don't like it much; I always fancy that the rope will break."

The opportunity for Joseph's initiation did not come so readily as his cousin had imagined, for the next day the wind changed to a quarter which Mr. Thompson had been watching for for weeks, and he started at once in the *Lively Susan* with a cargo which was overdue at a port on the mainland, taking his eldest son Gustavus with him.

The boys left behind had enough to do to look after the sheep. One day, however, while Christian and Joseph were engaged in this occupation, Reuben being at home doing some household work for his mother, a party of six men passed them with nets and ropes, and invited Joseph to come and see how they caught the guillemots, having heard him say an evening or two before that he wondered how it was done.

"Go along with them, Joseph;" said Christian. "I can look after the sheep well enough alone for an hour or two."

So he went.

Amongst his other accomplishments Joseph had by this time picked up a smattering of the language, and as many of the people also knew a little English, he got on very well. The present party consisted of broad, rough, hearty, good-humoured men, joking and laughing as they went along, their mirth being principally excited by Troll, the most reckless, careless fellow in the island, full of fun and a general favourite.

They had not far to go before they reached the place which they had marked for their operations, not more than half-a-mile indeed from where Christian had been left.

On reaching a part of the cliff where the sea had eaten into the coast, forming a little bay, they stopped, and one said :—

"This is the place where I noticed they lay so thick."

And Joseph, looking over, saw that about one hundred feet down there were a series of ledges, each with its thick row of guillemots, and more kept coming in and out from holes in the rock.

And now one of the men proceeded to strap a band with strings to it round each of his thighs, which done, he put on a pair of shoulder-straps, also provided with strings, which came under the arms round to the front. Some three yards back from the brink there was loose soil, and into this a stake was now driven. The edge of the cliff, however, was sheer rock, and so rough and sharp, that it looked as if it would fray or even cut any rope drawn tightly over it. This difficulty, however, was rectified by the help of a rude machine, which kept in place a wooden roller, over which the rope could play freely without coming into contact with the rock.

When all was ready, the man who was going over was bound to the rope, which was two-and-a-half inches in thickness, by the strings of his thigh-pieces and shoulder-straps, in such a manner that it must keep close to his chest, while his hands and feet were left perfectly free. Then the rope was given a turn round the stake, the others got a firm grip of it, and the cragsman, taking a net in his hand, went over the side of the precipice in the most unconcerned way possible. Joseph lay on his face looking down at him. He never touched the rope with his hand, and kept himself from twisting round by pressing his feet or his knees against the face of the rock, while those above let him down by paying out the rope, one of them watching him as Joseph was doing, ready to obey his signals. When he had reached a ledge where it was possible to crawl about, he sat down and deliberately untied himself from the rope, which now impeded

his movements, taking care to secure it, however, to a projecting crag close by him. Then he simply stretched his pole along the ridge where the guillemots sat, and scooped them into it; drew it in when full, killed the birds, and tied them in pairs by the bill.

This process was repeated again and again, till in a little more than an hour he had collected a hundred of them, when he once more tied himself to the rope, and made the signal to be drawn up.

"There's a fine lot of eggs in a crevice not fifty feet down," he said, as he disburthened himself of his victims; "but I could not force myself into it. If we had a boy now; do you think Reuben Thompson is coming this way, Joseph?"

"No, I know he isn't," answered the lad; "won't I do?"

"Yes, you are small enough; but you are not used to crag work. Won't you be frightened?"

"If I am I don't see that I can be hurt. It looks safe enough."

"And so it is too; well, you shall have a try. You must learn some day, I suppose, and why not now?"

Joseph had made the rash offer to go in a moment of pique, because he was ignored, and it did not even occur to the men to ask him. But when he came to be tied to the rope his heart greatly misgave him, though he was determined that he would not back out now. So he took the bag in which he was to put the eggs, slung it round his neck, and assumed as firm a bearing as he could, though he could not prevent his hands shaking and his breath coming short. Had his safety in any way depended on his nerve, the men would not have let him go, but he was firmly secured, and there was no real danger.

He knew very well that the more he looked at it the less he would like it, so directly all was ready, and the position of the crevice he was to crawl into had been pointed out clearly to him, he crept to the edge on his hands and knees, and let himself go over, but was unable for the life of him to help clutching the rope with his hands. The next moment he was swinging between sea and sky, and the sensation was even worse than he had anticipated; worse than looking down from the whispering gallery of Saint Paul's; worse than falling from a height in a dream. But he had the true grit in him, and through all the sensation of horror he maintained the feeling that it was unworthy, and he must fight it. And so he made himself look at the face of the cliff, not up or down, and he kept sense enough to stretch his feet out, as he had seen the other do, and fend himself off with them, so as to prevent turning round.

In a few seconds he found himself level with the crevice, into which he was just able to squeeze himself, and it did not take him long to fill his bag with eggs. When that was done it required another effort to leave his perch and give the signal to be drawn up. But he did it, and even refrained this time from touching the rope with his hands, which he used to preserve his eggs from being broken.

But when he was safely landed at the top, and unbound from the rope, everything went round and round for some minutes, and he very nearly fainted.

The men patted him on the back, and told him that he would make a first-rate hand at figling. And then he went back to Christian and the sheep, and related his adventure, which made a due impression upon his little cousin.

"I have never been on the rope," he said, "and I hate the thought of it. I saw such a nasty thing once."

"What was that?"

"You know Troll, the funny man; he is reckoned about the best cragsman of all, and he always goes to the most dangerous places. Well, one day I was walking along the cliffs, a mile and more from here, when I saw a lot of men looking over and talking as if they were excited about something, so I went to see what it was. The cliff juts out just there, and Troll, who was figling, had had to sway himself in in order to reach the ledge he wanted to clear of the guillemots.

"He had managed this all right, and untied himself from the rope, giving the end a hitch round a rough bit of rock, to keep it there till he wanted it again. He was now engaged in netting and killing the birds, supposing that it was all right. But those above could see that the rope had slipped from the place where he had fastened it, and was hanging several feet clear off the ledge, which was further in, a good bit, than the top of the cliff—I don't know how far, but it looked a long way to me. Presently Troll, who had collected his load, came back to the place where the rope should have been, and saw what had happened. Well, what do you think? He did not hesitate a bit. 'Hold on to the rope,' he holloed out. 'Aye, aye,' the look-out man shouted back, and Troll jumped—aye, jumped out and caught the rope as it swung. My word, it made me feel bad!

"'Don't haul up yet,' he then cried, as he hung there, clinging to the rope, and if he didn't swing himself back on to the ledge, in order to get his bundle of birds. Then he tied himself properly, and was drawn up."

"Ugh!" said Joseph, shutting his eyes. And all that night he kept waking with a start, fancying that he was falling down precipices.

Joseph Woadley came over to England last summer in the *Lively Susan*, on a visit to his mother and sister, who hardly knew him, he had grown into such a fine, hardy, manly fellow. It is doubtful whether he will continue to live with his uncle, or take up a seafaring life altogether. He has had a good offer with a Danish shipowner, and I rather fancy will close with it.





The Tin Mine Buoy.

NOW don't you begin cutting jokes, and trying to make paltry puns, and begin to shoot feeble fun in distorted words when I say I shall tell you a story about a big buoy. A buoy is a buoy, and not a boy. There is a good deal of difference between one and the other, without taking into question that little vowel *u*. I may say there are a good many differences between one and the other, although they sound so much alike ; but to my mind, speaking as a man who has seen a good deal of the water, fresh and salt, sweet and sour, the great difference between a buoy and a boy is, that the one will float without any more trouble than giving him a good coat of paint, whilst you might paint the other any colour you liked, and yet down he would go to the bottom.

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Now, of course, I mean a boy who has not been taught to swim. Take any boy you like, and drop him into deep water. When I say take any boy you like, and drop him into deep water, I hope you will not do anything of the kind, either with a boy you like, or a boy you don't like; but of course you know I am speaking experimentally, or recipe fashion, as they do in the cookery books, when they say "To make a hasty pudding: Take one pound of raisins, one pound of currants, one pound of candied peel, twenty well-beaten eggs"—and so on, and so on.

So take any boy and throw him, as I say, into deep water, and what would be the consequences?

First of all there would be a tremendous splash, and he would sink; then he would come up and begin to shout as he beat the water with his hands. He would swallow a great deal of water, and take a lot more into his lungs, and cough and choke, and make the water bubble and foam, and after going down and coming up again two or three times he would be drowned; or, rather, he would drown himself, from sheer ignorance, and the want of that wonderful instinct which enables other creatures to swim.

Take now an ordinary animal—I hope you will not, for I am, as I tell you, still speaking experimentally; and of course you did not leave our experimental boy to drown, but fished him out, wiped him dry, and returned him safe and sound to his mother—take, I say, an ordinary animal, and throw it in the water—suppose we say a cat or a kitten—and as soon as it comes to the surface it swims easily to the bank. If it is a pet dog, or a puppy, it will begin to paddle and splash for a few minutes, but sooner or later it finds out that it can swim, and soon gets to a place of safety. Cats can swim splendidly.

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Those great fellows, the lions, will even go into the sea. So will tigers, which have been known to swim across the strait that divides the island of Mizapore from the Malay Peninsula at Jahore.

An elephant is a splendid swimmer, big as he is ; and oxen, horses—there, I dare say every beast you can mention can swim, even a pig.

There is an old and very musty-sounding proverb, that a pig always cuts its throat when it tries to swim. Some pigs might by too high a stroke scratch their throats sore with their cloven hoofs, but they can swim easily. I have myself seen a drove enter the Thames of their own accord, and swim round a point, following my leader, with the greatest of willingness.

Why, even a snake can swim. This, too, I have seen. I am not speaking of your gigantic anacondas and pythons, though I have heard that they love the water ; nor yet of your genuine sea and river snakes, but of the ordinary common English snake, which will not only glide into the water, and wriggle easily over the surface, but will go below and stop at the bottom of a pond or stream apparently without the slightest inconvenience.

It is only your poor, unfortunate, highly-civilised, untaught boy who cannot swim. His nostrils seem to be in the wrong place, and all that weight of forehead and skull above presses them down below the water, while an ordinary animal has its breathing orifices just at the point of the snout, which it can keep above water, while the whole head may be supported by the water below. As for the elephant, that sagacious beast is better off than any, for unless in very deep water he could, as it were, walk at the bottom, and still keep the point of his trunk, with the nostrils above, in the air.

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Talk about this walking on the bottom, a man I know used to say that he would never drown ; for if he were ever to fall in the water he would never waste his strength by trying to swim, he should just quietly let himself sink to the bottom, and walk out.

I suppose he never tried. I did ; and, if you want to know the result of the experiment, it was a failure, and I cannot recommend the plan.

Under these circumstances, then, it stands to reason that as animals have few brains and can swim, while boys have plenty of brains and cannot naturally swim, they ought to be taught—the sooner the better. In fact, I go so far as to say that every boy of twelve years of age—unless circumstances have been very much against his learning—ought to be able to swim, and if he cannot, he ought to be ashamed of himself for neglecting a duty.

We used to be able to swim down at Coombe Sea, and it would have been a great shame if we had not possessed the power. For though ours was a terribly rocky coast, just below the village we had a little bay of the whitest sand. No, not sand, but tiny shells, and broken pieces of shell, nearly all of the same size, which was about eight times that of the ordinary grains of sand you see at seaside resorts.

Why, little shrimps of fellows not above four years old used to begin paddling up to their knees, and then get to be more venturesome, and go in as far as their waists, when some rude act of a wave would knock them over, or souse over them, leaving them struggling and laughing, and somehow they were soon able to swim.

There was a pier at Coombe Sea, built out from a reef of rocks, and curved round like a boomerang, as a shelter for the

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brown sailed fishing-boats that went out after the pilchards and mackerel, and ran in when the weather was rough.

This pier was about twenty feet wide, and stood square up out of the water, without a scrap of protecting wall, and there was deep water on both sides.

Well, this was about as dangerous a place as could be, and hence it was a favorite spot for the boys to meet upon, and fish for bass, or conger, or wrasse, or to play about when the boats were out.

Nobody seemed to think that the boys ought not to be there, or that they ran the risk of being drowned by falling in.

"Perhaps because they never did fall in," you will say.

That's a mistake. Somebody was always either falling in or being pushed in; but I never heard of a boy being drowned. He would go down splash, and as the pier rose like a wall from the bay it was impossible to climb up, so he either swam out or some boy who was a better swimmer went to his assistance. Perhaps, in a very bad case, a fisherman might come down from where he had been lolling on the cliff, and pull the boy out with a hitcher, to cuff him afterwards for not being able to swim.

Boys were plentiful at Coombe Sea, and so were buoys—buoys of all sorts. There were the painted bladders that the fishermen used to mark the places where they laid their batters and spitters, as they called the long lines fastened to a big killick, or stave, sometimes to a little grapnel, or anchor, at each end, on which lines they caught skate and big plaice, and sometimes turbot, brill, and even soles.

Then there were the rough buoys; sometimes only a piece of wood laid down between carefully taken bearings, to mark where the lobster pots were sunk, and to this day I have never

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quite made out why a round wicker basket, so made that a lobster or crab could creep in and not find the way out, should be called a pot.

Many a time have I been out with old Jacky Bond in his boat, to help him haul in his pots. He did not want any help, but I used to persuade him to let me go, and very much I must have been in the way, no doubt. But it was grand fun to row out over the glistening sea to where the buoys lay, and then haul up the dripping baskets, one after the other, empty or tangled with shining sea-weed, till up would come one, and I would cry, "Here he is."

Then there would be a tremendous squittering and splashing, and when the basket was hauled over the side, old Jack would cleverly lift out a great lobster or crab, and drop it in the bottom of the boat, about which it would begin to travel directly, with its great claws in the air pinching at everything it approached, until Jacky caught it by the back of the neck, nipped it lightly, and tied its claws with pieces of spun yarn; not from any fear of being pinched, but so that they should not fight and break each other's legs and claws; for sometimes a pot would be hauled up with two and even three lobsters inside, when two of them would probably be less a claw a-piece, the thrown-off limb being in the bottom of the trap.

Then there were the buoys that dotted the bay just outside the harbour; small barrels these were, fast to anchors buried in the sand; and to these barrel-buoys the fishing luggers were made fast in fine weather, to save the crew the trouble of working into the bay.

But chief of all were the great buoys that were placed by the Trinity House Board to mark dangerous reefs and rocks, and these were of various shapes and kinds.

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For instance, there was the bell buoy, that lay about a mile out to the north of our little bay, so balanced that the waves, as they washed to and fro, made it swing and keep tolling a large bell over a rock where many a poor sailor had been buried during a storm.

There was the tall buoy, as we used to call it—Black Rock Buoy it really was, and this was made just like a long cork float, the same as you buy on a sixpenny fishing-line. It, too, was painted red below and blue above. There was a great ring on the bottom, to which a chain was attached, and this again to a great nicker—a tremendous great piece of iron, made like a half-opened mushroom turned stalk uppermost; and thus secured, so they said, to anchor down in the sand, and it got filled up so that the buoy never drifted from its place.

Just like a cork float, too, only short, and stumpy, and fat, was Carn buoy; but in place of a cop like we put on a float this had a great red ball, which looked horrible if you rowed or sailed near it in the dark, for as the sea washed it to and fro it was like some large giant in the water, with his body half exposed, and his head bowing and bobbing at you in a way that was almost startling.

The nearest buoy to the harbour was Tin Mine Buoy, so called because it was exactly between the two old engine-houses on the hills on either side of the bay.

This was a different one again, for I saw it before it was moored with a great nicker over the lobster rock, a great mass of rough stone that came within six feet of the surface; and there on calm days you could lie in a boat and look down and see the fish pouring in and out among the sea-weed, and sometimes even catch sight of a conger's tail, the great eel

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being hidden, like an ostrich, with its head in some crevice of the rock, not in the sand.

Tin Mine Buoy, as you saw it lie, about a quarter of a mile out, looked like a pill-box floating on the sea ; but when it lay on the great lighter it looked like an enormous sugar-loaf made of plates of iron rivetted together, and it was about fifteen feet long from the big ring at the point to the flat top, for of course it was moored with the point downwards.

That buoy was noticed by everybody who came to our place ; and of course everybody there noticed it, but I think I have more reason to recollect it than anyone else, and I am going to tell you why.

I was about fourteen then, and when I say then, I mean one long hot summer that we had many years ago. It was holiday time, and we boys had had a splendid time, fishing and boating, and going into the rooms or caves along the coast in search of mystery, so it seems to me, for there was nothing but moss in these places and trickling water ; but they always had a dark, mysterious aspect to us, and we used to explore them with fear and trembling, and boxes of matches and an old ship's lantern, always expecting to find the treasures of the old smugglers and wreckers stored up at the farther end, or else one of the old dragons that tradition said once haunted Cornwall. But somehow we never found anything but stone, sand, moss and damp. Those were delicious times, though, and I can recall the thrill of dread with which we used to venture into some new cavern, slowly, step by step, after we had perhaps had to wriggle our way through a narrow slit between a couple of ragged masses of rock, or even had to break and clear several pieces away to enlarge the hole.

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As I have said, we never found anything to repay us for our labour; but the pleasure seemed always new, and whenever a hole was discovered that promised to lead into the rocks, we applied ourselves to it with the greatest zest.

One evening we boys—four of us—Harry Trevor, John Trevack, Mark Pollard and I, had been trying to work a way in between two pieces of rock laid down on the cliff face about a couple of miles from Coombe Sea.

For the munificent sum of sixpence, which he at once went to turn into smoke and beer, Jacky Bond had lent to us his old battered boat, which was so coated with fish slime and scales that none of the paint with which it had once been brushed could be seen.

We had rowed out and moored the boat close to the rocks, and listened to the hollow, mysterious gurgling of water within. We had been interested, too, in the trickling of a copper-charged stream of water, which dyed the rough bluish-green surface; but we could not work a way in, and, consequently, though we returned sad and disappointed, we filled the supposed cave with wonders, and felt that we had come to the treasures at last.

"I tell you what," said Mark Pollard, who had been pulling one scull on the way back very silently; "let's get sixpen'orth o' powder, and blow that hole bigger. That's the way to do it."

"Why, it would blow all the rocks down, and we should be killed," said Harry Trevor.

"Bosh!" exclaimed Jack Revack. "Sixpen'orth o' powder wouldn't do it, nor a shillingsworth neither. Here, pull away, boys, and let's get home."

"Ah, it's all very well to say pull away," I said, sulkily, for

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I was rowing with Harry Trevor; "but it's so hot one seems to have no strength at all."

"I think there's going to be a storm," said Harry Trevor.

"Good job too," exclaimed Mark Pollard. "A nice rain would be delicious."

"Why, we should be all wet," said Jack Revack. "I don't want to get wet."

"I do," cried Harry Trevor; "all over. I'm red hot, nearly. I say, let's have a bathe."

"Ah, let's have a bathe," echoed Jack Revack.

"Who's to mind the boat?" said Mark Pollard.

"Nobody. Let the boat mind itself and our clothes," said Harry Trevor. "She'll drift with the tide back towards the town, and we can have a good swim, and by that time we shall be nearly home."

"Oh, I think we'd better get back first," I said, as I looked round at the heaving, hazy surface of the sea. The sun had gone down, and the sea was perfectly calm, while the air was sultry to a degree. There was not a sound to be heard, except the wheezing, querulous cry of a gull or two as they slowly sailed over the surface, dipping down now and then after some of the small fry playing on the surface of the water; and as I dipped my hand in over the side of the boat I felt a slight tingling sensation, which I knew from experience meant that the sea would "brime" as soon as it was dark, as there was abundance of phosphorescent light.

"Here's a chap thinks he had better go home first, and get two towels and a cake of scented soap," cried Harry Trevor, who was already half undressed. "Now, boys, who's coming?"

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"I am," said Mark Pollard, who was nearly as far advanced towards swimming trim.

"Come," said John Revack, slipping off his loose holland blouse; "you must come too, or they'll say you arn't game."

"Oh, I'm game enough," I said, stoutly, and rising up in the boat I pulled off my jacket and vest, and sat down again to get rid of my shoes, just as Mark Pollard stood up in the prow, raised his hands above his head, and shouted, "Cock-a-doodle-do!"

Then, taking a spring, he leaped forward, making the boat rock so suddenly that Harry Trevor, who was on the middle thwart, lost his balance, and went over backwards, the two making almost one splash as far as sound was concerned.

John Revack and I roared with laughter, entering into the fun of the thing now, and tearing off our clothes.

Up popped Harry Trevor to lay hold of the gunwale, panting and blowing.

"I say," he spluttered, "I wasn't ready."

"Yo hoy!" shouted Mark Pollard, shooting up ten yards away, and shaking his head to get rid of the water. "Come on, boys, it's just nobby."

"Whoo hoop! Stand by!" I said, as I took a header; and when I came up out of the deliciously cool water, Jack Revack had just disappeared, and the boat was gently rocking to and fro.

"Oh, I say it is lovely," cried Harry Trevor, throwing himself upon his back, and gently paddling with his hands; "I wish we'd come in sooner."

He was right. The sensation of bathing in the tepid sea on that glorious, still, hot evening was delicious, and not disposed for any great amount of exertion, we swam about, all being

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quite at home in the water, till, as if moved by one impulse, we quietly made for the boat, two on either side, laid a hand upon the gunwale, and drifted with it slowly on along abreast of the mighty range of granite cliffs that ran for miles away from our little town, as the people called it there.

The evening was growing darker, but there was no sign of the storm, for overhead the great golden stars were beginning to twinkle here and there, only feebly though, for there was too much light out in the north-west for the stars to gain much sway, and there seemed every likelihood of its being almost twilight all the night.

But how hot it was; how breathless the air. Even the gunwale of the boat struck warm to our hands, while seaward there was a curious heavy look, as if a great curtain had been drawn across the bay.

"Now then," cried Harry Trevor, "one good swim and then on board, and toggerify, and row home. I want my supper."

"All right," said Revack; "race out till I cry *back*, and then all turn. Come on."

Down we went like so many porpoises, getting the next minute well abreast, and swimming easily and well, till we had left the boat far behind.

"Now, Jack," I shouted, "say back, and let's turn."

"Get out," said Mark Pollard; "why we havn't had half a swim yet. Not afraid, are you?"

"Don't look like it," I said, feeling nettled at being looked upon as a coward, and throwing myself on my side, I struck out strongly, and being already a few yards ahead, I soon left my companions farther behind.

"Go it, steamer!" shouted Harry Trevor; and in my

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boyish vanity I made up my mind to show them that I was the best swimmer there, and swam on hard and fast.

I was going well on through the water, looking back at my companions all the time, and wondering when Jack Revack would give the word, when all at once it came.

"Back! Back!"

But as the sound reached my ears, I seemed to have become dizzy and unable to see clearly, and dashed my hand across my eyes. That made me better of it, and I knew that my eyes were quite right. It was the air that was in fault, for one of the thick day summer fogs that sometimes float upon the surface of the sea had suddenly closed in round me, and, as it were, completely shut me in.

For a moment or two I was puzzled, and began treading water as I looked around, to find that even a yard away the surface of the sea was hardly visible. And now I felt that it was time to swim back as swiftly as I could.

"Ahoy!" I shouted, as I swam on.

"Ahoy!" came back, and I found that I was going too far to my right; so remedying that error, I altered my course, and was going well now on my left side, and expecting each moment to be clear of the fog, and to see my companions.

Instead of this though, the haze grew thicker, and to make matters worse, I heard a hail now that sounded distant, and went off, as it were, quite away over my left shoulder.

I shouted back a cheery "ahoy" to keep up my own courage, and swam away as hard as I could in the fresh direction, hoping now to get out of the haze; one of those which I knew were sometimes perfectly level and perpendicular at the edge, so that a boat would be out of sight one minute and come into view the next; as sometimes I had seen

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them row or sail right into a sea fog, and disappear as if a curtain had been lifted and dropped down behind them.

There was no answer to my hail, so I shouted again, and this time I heard a reply, but faint and distant, and not in the direction in which I was swimming with all my might.

I stopped short, with the blood coming warmly into my face.

"This won't do," I said to myself, huskily; and for a few moments I began to swim with rapid strokes.

Fortunately my strength of mind came back, and I turned over on my back to rest myself.

"They shall row to me," I said. "They must have got to the boat by now."

I lay paddling softly with my hands, looking up at the thick haze, which had made it quite dark; and, taking a long breath, I gave vent to a regular sea-going hail.

To my horror, it sounded low and stifled, and when I shouted again there was the same result; the dense air shut me in, and the darkness grew, moment by moment, more dense.

"They'll never find me if they come," I said to myself. "What shall I do?" And a curious chill of fear came over me, making me shudder, and seeming to rob me of the power to move.

In an instant I was over on my chest; then, with my head thrown back, paddling like a dog.

Three minutes of this and I should have been drowned; but all at once I seemed to know this, and, as if strength came with that knowledge, I began to swim again, panting hard for my breath, but with a slow and steady stroke, listening the while for some hail from my companions.

"It is no use to swim," I thought. "Without bearings I

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may be swimming right away from help." And this thought seemed to chill me once more, but not so much as before, for in an agony of fear I fought it off, and went on swimming again, slowly and well.

It was very horrible. I did not want to think, I only wanted to swim; but the thought would keep coming that I could not go on swimming very long, and that then I must sink.

"I won't sink; I will swim," I said to myself, hoarsely, and fighting off the horrible feeling of fear, I began to swim deliberately on, to think of how soon I could reach the shore, for I had no hope now of the boat.

If I swam straight for the town, not a mile; if I swam straight the other way I should get across the bay in about four miles, while if I swam in any other direction I should be going right out to the open sea.

This last thought sent a shiver through my limbs, but not so cold and paralysing as that which followed, when I knew that I had not the slightest idea in which direction I was going, nor yet whether I was even swimming straight.

Just then I grew excited once more, and began to swim faster; but the desire for life seemed to give me calm reflection, and my stroke slowed down to the regular swimming pace.

I shouted. Again I shouted, but it was as if I was shut in; and after as loud a hail as I could give, it seemed to exhaust me, so that I settled down into a stubborn determination to swim steadily on till my arms sank to my side, and then I meant to try and float.

How long I swam I cannot tell. It seemed like hours—it could not have been more than half of one—and then, with my lips lower and lower, my breath coming thick and fast,

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and a horrible sensation of helplessness creeping from my legs to my heart, I turned over, and floated in that dreadful obscurity, thinking of home, of my companions, of nothing, for I was stunned, as it were, and utterly exhausted.

Just then the water closed over my face, and in an agony of desire for life I threw myself round and struck out once more, but quicker, each stroke with greater feebleness—with less way.

Then the water bubbled over my lips, up into my nostrils, with a terrible hot sensation, as if it were scalding, and I struck out again, uttering a hoarse, wild cry for help, and then down I went, as I made a false stroke, throwing my arm out of the water.

A frantic struggle, and I was on the surface once again, seeing that there was darkness everywhere, and I forced myself to make one more effort to gain the side-stroke, but my hand came heavily against something hard.

I clutched at it, and it seemed to give way, but I clutched again and again, my hands seeming to tear at round smooth knobs upon an iron surface, and then as I made a feeble dash at it to get a hold higher up, my right hand caught at the edge of something flat, my other hand joined it, and then somehow I contrived to swing, feeling that it was but a matter of moments before my hands would glide off, and I should be once more struggling for life.

I clung there for some minutes, getting feebler, but with my brain more clear, panting and labouring for breath, I revived where I was, and thought that if I could by some effort gain a certain position, it might mean life.

How did I haul myself up? I cannot tell. It all seems now as misty as the sea fog that closed me in. All I can remember is, that as the great hollow metal cone to which I clung gently

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swayed to and fro, I swayed with it, bearing it lower in the water on the side to which I clung; and that after a time I lowered myself down into the water to the full stretch of my arms for a minute, and then made an upward leap, brought my feet to bear, and scrambled on to the flat top to faint dead away.

That is the only interpretation I can put upon it, for when I seemed to wake from a sleep, I was crawling there upon the cold iron drum-like top, gently swaying to and fro, and the darkness around me was almost black.

My first effort was to hail, but my voice sounded crushed and strange, and when I rose up a little, supporting myself on my arms, the buoy swayed over so much, that in an agony of fear I lay down flat, clinging to the edges with outstretched hands, and rocking to and fro.

By degrees, though, my senses seemed somewhat to return. The dread was not so intense, and I began to realise that I was perfectly safe.

"They'll see me in the morning, and fetch me off," I said to myself; and now that the great dread was removed, I was able to think about minor matters. For instance, I began to feel terribly cold, and shivered, then my knees smarted a great deal, and I could feel that I had grazed them and made them bleed in scrambling upon the buoy; and soon after I began to notice how phosphorescent the sea had turned; and now it was as if it was covered with a film of liquid gold, which tapped softly against the sides of the buoy, and made its shape quite distinct in the darkness.

I was utterly numbed and exhausted with my exertions, and so it happened that by degrees the cold did not seem to be so intense as I lay flat upon the buoy, wondering how long

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it would be before day came, and that it should be so cold and dark, and—

And—

Yes, that “and” represents where I left off thinking, for I was so completely worn out by my exertions that, in spite of the cold and danger, I dropped into a deep sleep, to wake feeling warm and comfortable, the sky above me of a clear blue, and the sun baking me, as it were, and heating the top of the buoy, so that it was quite pleasant to the touch.

For a few minutes I could not understand my position, and clung there half alarmed ; but I soon recovered from that, and standing erect, I began waving my hands and hailing the shore.

Two hours elapsed, though, before I was seen, and a boat came to take me off, when I found that I had been given up at home as dead, my three companions having reached our boat before the fog overtook them, and after hailing for me some time, rowing back to the harbour to report that I was drowned.

The moral to my story is, if you bathe from a boat don't go far away ; and, above all, never play foolhardy tricks, such as seeing who can swim farthest out to sea. You may not always meet with a friendly buoy.





The Little Earthen Pot.

A GREEK STORY.

QUONCE upon a time there lived an old man who owned a fine carob-tree that furnished food to all his children. Well, this tree grew and grew till it nearly touched the sky. The old man used to climb it, gather the pods, and throw them down for his children to eat. One day he climbed up to the very top. In the air above him he heard Summer and Winter quarrelling which of them was the best.

Winter said: "I am the best."

Summer said: "No; I am the best."

At last they noticed the old man sitting in his carob-tree, and agreed he should decide their dispute; so they told him their differences.

The old man was much puzzled for an answer.

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"Dear! dear!" he said; "Winter and Summer are both so good, it is difficult to choose between them. Winter brings rain to moisten the ground so that we can sow; Summer brings heat that ripens our corn."

The disputants were quite satisfied with this wise answer. They gave the old man an earthen pot in token of their gratitude.

"This pot," they said, "will bring you everything you need; but you must not reveal the secret to anyone living."

The old man was very pleased with the gift. He climbed down the tree, and commanded the pot to give him some dinner. In an instant his table was covered with delicious viands, enough for the whole family; and they ate them, and wondered whence they came.

Next day the little pot brought a second feast. This was too strange, and the old man's wife began to tease for information how her husband managed to cook so much and so well. She begged, she prayed, she threatened. At last the man could stand her importunity no longer, and he told her his secret.

It happened a few days later that their son saw a beautiful Princess who lived in their neighbourhood. To see her was to love her; and the youth loved her to distraction. He begged his mother to go to the Queen and beg her to persuade the King to let him marry the Princess.

The mother thought this a very sensible idea, but the father laughed at it, and tried to dissuade them; it was of no use, however. The mother sought out the King next day, and told him her son's wish.

"What does this mean?" cried the King. "What impudent beggar is this who dares ask the hand of my daughter?"

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Nothing daunted, the woman repeated her demand.

"Well, then, listen," said the King. "I will give you my daughter if you own a palace by to-morrow morning; but mind, the palace must be far more beautiful than mine, and it must stand just opposite."

The mother left, took the little pot, and ordered it to build a palace.

Next morning the King looked out of his window, and behold! opposite his palace stood a rival, glittering with gold and silver. Then he refused his daughter's hand no longer; and she was betrothed that same day to the old man's son. It was a great feast, and the old man and his wife were invited.

Now the King and his servants succeeded in making the old man drunk, and so forced him to reveal his secret. Then they took his pot away from him, and put another in its place. The old man went home unconscious of his loss. But next day when he demanded dinner, no little pot bestirred itself, and he discovered the trick that had been played him. In despair he went to the King, and besought him to return his little pot; but the King gave no ear to his prayers. Full of sorrow he once more climbed his carob-tree to gather pods for food, but there were only three or four left, and though he clambered up to the very top in search of more, it was in vain.

While he sat up there, sad and disconsolate, he heard Summer and Winter quarrelling again. He called out to them, and begged them, for the love of Heaven, to help him get his pot back.

But they said: "Did we not warn you to keep your secret to yourself? This is the well-merited punishment for your folly."

THE LITTLE EARTHEN POT.

Then the old man said: "Have pity, for my children's sake."

"Be it so," they answered. "Take this stick and this rope, they will bind whomsoever you wish."

The old man climbed down the tree quickly, and went into the palace, where the King and his whole family were assembled. He instantly ordered his rope to bind them all, and then told his stick to beat them. Stick and rope did their duty so well, that soon everyone cried out for mercy.

The young man married the Princess, the old man got his pot back again, and he and his wife lived in peace and plenty till they died.





Ironclads in Action.

AT the time of the Crimean War a brave Admiral left England with his fleet for Saint Petersburg, *via* Cronstadt, the fortifications of which he doubted not easily to destroy in passing. But he found that even to attempt it, to come within range of those forts, would be to incur the certain destruction of every ship he had under his command. For since he had last been on active service horizontal shell fire had been invented, and that made all the difference.

Up to that period shells were round hollow iron balls, filled with powder, and having a hole through which a fuse protruded; and they were fired out of a short, dumpy cannon, called a mortar, always into the air, so as to pitch on the place aimed at, the explosion being regulated by cutting the fuse longer or shorter. They were effective in bombarding a town,

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because wherever they fell and exploded they were likely to do mischief, blowing buildings up, and setting them on fire. Also, when pitched deftly into batteries they bothered the artillerymen, and sometimes dismounted the guns; but used against ships they were not so very formidable. If timed to burst immediately over them, of course they would make havoc with spars, rigging, and men on the upper deck. Ditto if they pitched on the deck and exploded there. But even then they inflicted no permanent injury on the hull, unless a hatchway were left open, and the shell rolled down it and burst in the hold—a most improbable combination of circumstances; and even exactly to pitch the missile on to the deck of a ship required a great combination of skill and luck; after which it might roll overboard, especially if there was any sea on, or be tossed over, an event which has happened in real life as well as in melodrama.

But in an evil hour some mischievous genius, instead of employing his talents usefully, invented a method of firing shell point blank, like solid shot. They were no longer round, but long, with a penetrating point, and could either be exploded by a fuse, regulated in a new manner, insuring greater accuracy, or by concussion, so that when the missile struck anything it burst. One of these striking a wooden ship and exploding in the side near the water-line, would blow a hole big enough to sink her. Now a sailor was always ready to take his ship under a fire of shot which went through and through her, and run his chance of being hit by them or the splinters they made, or of being sent to the bottom by a series of concentrated broadsides between wind and water. But when it came to a certainty, when all these shots were shells, any one of which taking effect would suffice, to run

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within range of a battery was simply suicidal and absurd, and no commander, however reckless he might be about his own life, would be justified in so sacrificing his men, without any chance of effecting anything whatever. The naval question then was, How to keep out the shells? And armour-plates were made, and riveted on to the sides of the ships; and the shells fell back from them into the sea. Then the artillery engineers, being put on their mettle, made bigger and stronger guns, and penetrated the armour-plates, which had to be thickened; whereupon the gunners made still bigger guns. And so the game of competition has gone on. Also the new armoured ships had to carry still larger and larger guns, both to pound each other with, and also to compete with the batteries on shore; and this has made very great changes in the whole system of shipbuilding; and we have turret-ships with revolving towers on them, and other varieties of floating batteries.

Now, if you have a new pair of skates given you, you want a frost for a chance of trying them. It is the same thing with a racket, a bat, or even a school-book; and do not flatter yourself that you will outgrow this. Men want to play with their new toys just the same as boys, and if a country finds itself with a very fine army, it longs to go to war with somebody. And so it is a sad disappointment to some artillerists that they should never get the chance of practising at anything but targets and dummies, which cannot make any return—show no sport, in fact.

There has, indeed, been hitherto only one set-to between ironclads, which makes what otherwise would have been a war of only local interest worthy of general attention. For people have got into the way, perhaps unjustly and im-

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properly, of regarding small South American Republics somewhat as Dr. Watts did dogs, bears and lions—"Let them fight, for 'tis their nature to." As soon expect peace in an Irish fair as on the shores of the Pacific. But, if you come to examine into the matter, the war between Chili and Peru was a thousand pities. All along the coast, from Callao to Antofagasta, towns have been burned, beautiful gardens, vineyards, and orchards destroyed; manufactories burned to the ground, and thriving industries put an end to, and the population decimated and ruined.

There are three of these South American Republics—old Spanish dependencies which have become independent—close together: Peru, Bolivia, and Chili. If you will take the trouble to look at a map, you will see a place on the coast, near the 25°, called El Paposo; that was originally the northern limit of Chili, and in 1825, when the separation from the mother country, and the formation of a new state to be called Bolivia, finally took place, a small strip of sea-coast was allotted to the young republic, consisting of the Atacama desert, between the boundaries of Chili and Peru. There was no dispute about this for a long time; Atacama and the district on the north of it, called Tarapaca, were both looked upon as barren wildernesses, not worth possessing save as affording a sea-board to an inland country, except, indeed, that it was known that near Iquique in Tarapaca there were two silver mines. But after a time it was discovered that there were also silver mines in Atacama, richer in ore than the others; that any amount of nitrate of soda and borax was to be found in both regions; and that the guano, accumulated on every headland along the coast, was of very great value indeed.

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The Chilians on the border were not slow to discover the money that was to be made out of these things, and they employed both their labour and capital in turning them to profit. Then it occurred to some clever Chilian that there must be some mistake about the boundary, 23 and 25 are so much alike; no doubt it must have been the 23rd parallel. So the Chilian Government laid claim to it. The Bolivians pulled long faces at this, for the district between the 25° and the 23° was just their richest bit of territory; but they did not know the terms of the original agreement, and thought Chili might be in the right. They demurred and disputed, however; whereupon Chili proposed to split the difference and say the 24th parallel, to which she had no more real claim than to the 23rd. But Bolivia looked upon this as a concession, and acceded to it, and even agreed that in consideration of it, Chili should receive half the value of custom dues from minerals exported between the 23rd and 24th parallels.

It seems curious that General Melgarejo, the President of Bolivia at the time, should not have known the proper boundary of his country; but he did not, and Chili stole this march upon him on the 10th of August, 1866.

The clause about Chili receiving half the dues was the occasion of endless disputes, the officials reporting that the agreement was evaded, and they did not receive enough. And then, in 1870, some new and very rich silver mines were discovered north of the 24th parallel, and, consequently, just out of Chilian territory, which exasperated those enterprising people, who, with all their sharp practice, had just missed such a good thing.

The Bolivian Government granted a concession to a

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Company which undertook to work these mines, and which was managed by an Englishman, but there were very many Chilian shareholders, and most of the workmen employed were Chilians. The nearest port being Antofagasta, the Company was called by that name; and the Antofagasta Company was the immediate cause of the war.

For there were certain duties which had to be paid by it to the Bolivian Government, and in 1874 Chili proposed another treaty, by which she agreed to give up her claim to half the proceeds of export duties between the 23rd and 24th parallel on condition that all Chilian industries established on the Bolivian coast should be duty free for twenty-five years. A dispute arose about this treaty; the Bolivians said that their Congress had refused to ratify it, they were not bound by it, and a small duty they must have. The Chilians maintained that a responsible agent had accepted the treaty, that it was in force, and they would not pay a centavo. So when the manager of the Antofagasta Company was applied to for the duty by the Prefect of the Province, in December, 1878, he would not pay; upon which the Prefect had an auction held on the premises, and sold as much of the company's property as amounted to the sum claimed.

Upon this Chili, immediately commenced hostile operations, seizing the principal Bolivian ports, and marching troops into the country. Peru, who was bound by a close alliance to Bolivia, offered to mediate and try to make peace; but Peru had offended the Chilians by making the nitrate deposits of Tarapaca a Government monopoly; individuals who had sunk their capital in the business, or who earned their living by working at it, conceiving themselves injured. However, the offer was not at once refused, though the only result of the

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negotiations was to draw Peru herself also into the war, which was declared by Chili on the 5th April, 1879.

It all went one way from the first, Chili being prepared, earnest and anxious to fight; their opponents, without naval or military organisation fit to oppose them, desirous only of peace, and laying themselves open to strategic disadvantages by their readiness to accept any feigned offers of reconciliation. Indeed, the Peruvians had nothing to gain and everything to lose by war, and they only struck in self-defence.

But with the fighting on dry land we have nothing to do, our present interest being confined to the practical test of ironclads.

The Chilian fleet consisted of the *Almirante Cochrane* and *Blanco Encalado*, sister ships, built at Hull. They were of 3,560 tons, and 2,920 horse-power. Their armour-plates were nine inches thick at the water-line, and six to eight round the battery, and they were fitted with twin screws. Their armament consisted of six 9-inch Armstrong guns of twelve tons, two Nordenfelts, and some lighter guns; of the *Chacabuco* and *O'Higgins*, corvettes, each of 1,670 tons, and 800 horse-power, carrying three 7-ton Armstrongs, and four 40-pounders; of the *Magallanes*, armed with a 150-pounder; the *Abtao*, carrying three of like calibre; two smaller armed vessels, and ten steam transports.

The Peruvians, on the other hand, had a turret ship named *Huascar*, built by Messrs. Laird, at Birkenhead, but of a much older type than the *Almirante Cochrane* and the *Blanco Encalado*, for whereas the Chilian ships were turned out in 1875, the *Huascar* dated back to 1866. She was of 1,130 tons, and 300 horse-power, and her length was 200 feet. The armour protecting her turret was five feet and a half thick, and that

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was the strongest part; quite insufficient against some of the Chilian artillery. She carried two 10-inch Armstrong 300-pounders, and two 40-pounder Whitworths; also the *Independencia*, 215 feet long, 2,004 tons, 550 horse-power, armour four inches and a half; an old-fashioned broad-side ironclad. She carried twelve 70-pounders on the main deck, and two 150-pounders, four 32-pounders, and four 9-pounders on the upper deck. There were also two wooden corvettes, the *Union* and *Pilcomayo*, the former renowned for speed, armed with 70-pounders.

There were thus only four vessels to the Chilian eight, unless two monitors, the *Atahualpa* and *Manco Copac* are counted in; but these were not sea-going vessels, but floating batteries, used for the protection of the mouths of harbours.

But the *Huascar* had a captain with a good head on his shoulders, and a dauntless heart in his breast: Miguel Grau, who made a name for himself by the way in which he for a long time out-manceuvred the enemy's fleet, and hampered all their movements with his ceaseless activity and judicious daring.

In the May of 1879 he learned that the Chilians, who were blockading Iquique, had withdrawn the more formidable part of their fleet to make a reconnaissance to Callao, the port of Lima, the Peruvian capital, leaving only the wooden corvette *Esmeralda* and the *Covadonga*, gunboat, to continue the blockade.

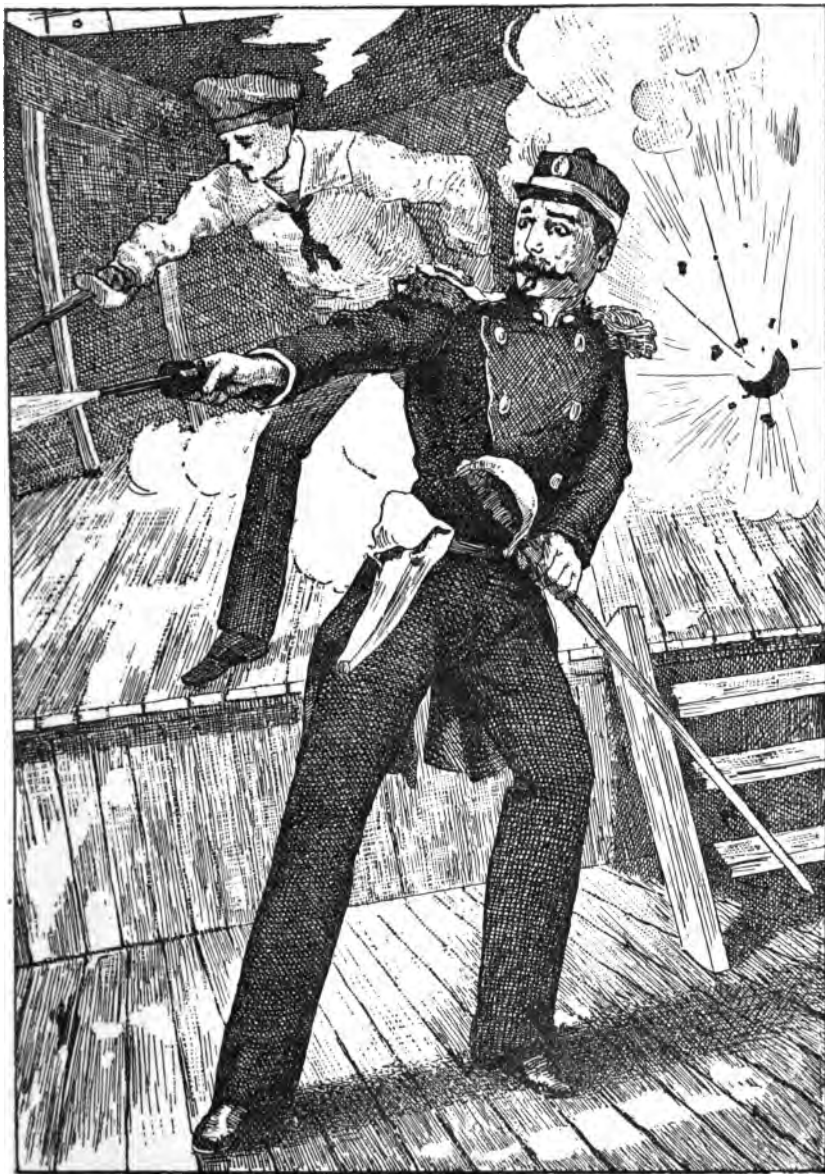
As the fleet stood well out to sea, the *Huascar*, accompanied by the *Independencia*, kept close in shore, and slipped by it, arriving off the port of Iquique before daylight on May 21st. When the sun rose the two Chilian vessels were in sight, and Grau made for the *Esmeralda*, leaving Captain Moore, of the *Independencia*, to attack the gunboat. The captain of the *Esmeralda*,

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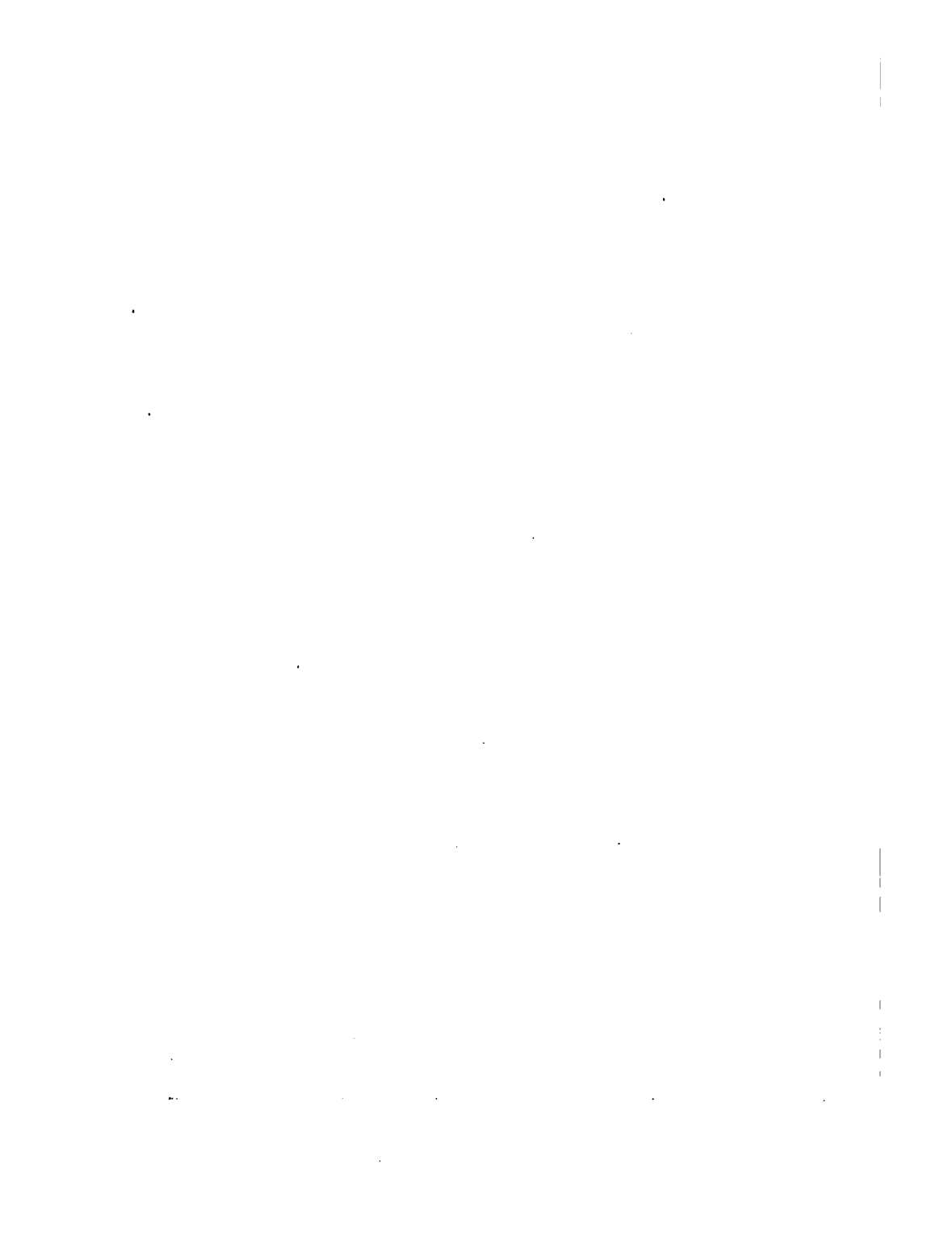
whose name, by-the-bye, was Pratt—which looks as if he and the Peruvian Moore were of similar extraction—finding himself over-matched, steamed in towards land, hoping, as she drew so much less water, to get the *Huascar* aground in the attempt to follow her over the shallows. But one of the corvette's boilers burst, which frustrated this manœuvre, although at the time of the accident she had got so far in that the *Huascar* could not approach nearer than about a thousand yards, at which distance they blazed away at one another furiously. Of course the ironclad *Huascar* ought to have sunk the wooden Chilian promptly, but to do this it was necessary to hit her, and they were shocking bad shots on both sides. At last a harbour battery got the range of the *Esmeralda*, and forced her to go further out, and then the turret-ship, getting closer, managed to hit her with a shell, which set her on fire. But this was put out, and Grau, finding it difficult for his men to repeat their skilful performance, lost patience, and sought to use his ram, and struck his enemy a little aft, on the port side, but not with effective force.

Directly the collision occurred, Captain Pratt, sword in one hand, and pistol in the other, leaped on the deck of the *Huascar*; but the vessels separated so quickly that only one man had time to follow. The only visible person on the deck of the turret-ship was a signal officer, so Pratt shot him, and then got killed himself.

Captain Grau then rammed the *Esmeralda* a second time, smashing in her starboard bow, and letting in enough water to flood her magazine, and put out her fires. Again boarding was attempted by Lieutenant Serrano, with a few men, but they were immediately shot down by the crew of the *Huascar*, sheltered in the turret and tower.



"Captain Pratt, sword in one hand, and pistol in the other, leaped on the deck of the *Huascar*."—Page 212.



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The unfortunate *Esmeralda* was now sinking, but would not surrender, so the *Huascar* rammed her a third time, sending her to the bottom. Out of a crew of two hundred officers and men only fifty were picked up by the *Huascar's* boats; the rest went down with the ship.

In the meantime the *Independencia* was chasing the *Covadonga* gunboat, which was commanded by the son of a Scotchman, who had married a Peruvian, and whose name was Condell. He tried the same game that the *Esmeralda* had done, but as his boilers did not burst, with greater success, and managed to draw the Peruvian ship on to a reef of rocks near Panta Gruesa, some ten miles from Iquique.

When he had his enemy hard and fast, Condell took up a position with his gunboat, from which he could blaze away at short range without getting any return, the guns of the stranded *Independencia* not being able to be brought to bear upon him. And this one-sided action was kept up until the *Huascar*, having finished the *Esmeralda*, came to the help of her consort, and then the Chilian gunboat sheered off, having done her work, for the *Independencia* was a total wreck.

This misfortune rendered the success of Grau in the destruction of the *Esmeralda* of no importance whatever. Peru had only possessed two ironclads, and now one of them was gone. The *Huascar* was all she had to rely upon, and certainly Grau made the utmost use of her. For more than four months he defied the Chilian fleet; avoiding action when the odds were against him, but ever on the coast, ready to take advantage of any opportunity offered by the blockading vessels; intercepting stores, capturing troop-ships with reinforcements on board, and harassing the enemy's traders. Her career was nearly brought to a premature conclusion, by trying what was

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then a new weapon—the torpedo—which was directed against the Chilian vessels in Antofagasta Bay. But there was something wrong about the thing, which caused it to turn round and come straight back at the *Huascar*, which would probably have been destroyed—hoisted by her own petard—had it not been for one of her lieutenants, named Diez Causeco, who jumped overboard, and managed to turn the torpedo's course clear of the ship.

This danger escaped, Grau continued his course of worrying his enemy so successfully that the Chilian public grew very indignant with their naval authorities, who with so powerful a fleet, comparatively, at their disposal, allowed themselves to be defied and played with by one ironclad, far inferior to either of their first-class ships, and hardly a match for either of the corvettes. To incur the displeasure of the sovereign people is a serious thing in a small republic, and though no one was put to death on the present occasion to encourage the others, after the fine old Athenian plan, the Minister of War and the Admiral were displaced, and fresh men appointed, who raised the blockade of Iquique, overhauled the entire fleet, and devoted all their energies to the capture or destruction of the *Huascar*, perceiving that with that vessel out of the way they could land troops at any moment and at any part of the coast they chose, which was another way of saying that Peru and Bolivia, at any rate so far as their seaport towns were concerned, would lie at their mercy.

At the beginning of October, 1879, the Chilian fleet left Valparaiso for the purpose of finally hunting down the *Huascar*, which vessel they were informed, on reaching Arica, was cruising to the southward, in company with a wooden corvette, the *Union*. Measures were at once taken to intercept

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her. The *Cochrane*, the *O'Higgins*, and the *Loa* were to cruise some distance out to sea, while the *Blanca*, with Riveros, the new Admiral on board, the *Covadonga*, and the *Matias Cousino* kept along the coast near Mexillones and Antofagasta, which last place Grau was likely to be watching, as there were many Chilian vessels in the port, which it would be in accordance with his custom to look out for and pounce upon when they came out, especially if they had troops on board to be landed on the Peruvian coast.

The trap was skilfully set.

On the morning of the 8th of October, the *Huascar* and *Union* were cruising northwards, slowly because of the misty condition of the atmosphere. As the sun rose the fog lifted, and revealed three columns of smoke close to the land, near Mexillones. Recognising what these portended, Grau signalled the danger to the *Union*, and altered his course to the westward. As the light grew stronger, he knew the enemy's ships to be the *Blanco*, *Covadongo* and *Matias Cousino*, and knowing that his own vessel and the *Union* could easily beat these for speed, he felt safe. But presently three more vessels came in sight right ahead, which soon proved to be the *Cochrane*, *O'Higgins*, and *Loa*.

The *Huascar* was in the toils at last.

The first act of her commander was to signal the *Union* to part company, for owing to her great speed she had more than a good chance of getting clear off. She could have been of no possible use against the ironclads, and Peru could not afford to lose her, so this was undoubtedly the wisest course. And she got clear off.

In the meantime Grau prepared for action, and kept close in under the land, so as not to afford so good a mark; and at

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twenty-five minutes past nine he opened the ball by firing a shot from the turret at the *Cochrane*, about three thousand yards off. And thus the only fight which has as yet taken place between modern ironclads commenced.

The three first shots were short; the fourth, which was a ricochet, went through the *Cochrane's* galley, piercing the armour plating; and then in turn the Chilian vessel opened fire. She also took three shots to find the range, and her fourth hit the *Huascar's* turret, and injured the machinery which enabled it to revolve. Then a shot from the Peruvian monitor struck the *Cochrane*, but though it loosened and indented a plate, did not penetrate.

After a while the two ships neared each other, and Grau tried to ram, but the *Cochrane*, being fitted with twin screws, easily avoided the *Huascar*, which had not got that advantage. Again and again the attempt was made, but as often foiled, the vessels being so close that an incessant rifle and mitrailleuse fire was maintained.

At five minutes to ten a Chilian shell struck and penetrated the pilot tower of the *Huascar*, and exploded inside, utterly demolishing the tower, and blowing Grau and a lieutenant, who were in it at the time, literally to pieces, for only a portion of Grau's leg could be discovered when all was over. The fight, when this occurred, had been going on just half an hour, and the practice was very bad, few shots taking effect on either side.

Grau dead, Don Elias Aguirre took command, and just then the *Blanco*, sister ship to the *Cochrane*, came into action, and one of her shells killed him, and disabled the next in command. Two more officers succeeded, and were killed, and then Lieutenant Don Pedro Garezon took command of

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the ill-fated *Huascar*, whose turret had been pierced, and a gun in it disabled, while her steam steering gear had long since been rendered useless. Still she fought on till eleven o'clock, when her flag was at last hauled down in token of surrender.

The officers of the *Cochrans* who boarded to take possession found a horrible sight. The effect of the shells, both on the upper and lower deck, had been to blow the bodies of the crew into small fragments, so that bits of the human frame strewed the ship in all directions. One-third of the officers and men were *hors de combat*—sixty-four in all, that is. She was on fire, and there were three feet of water in the hold. About time to give in, I should say.

The conquerors set the conquered to work at once, and the fire was put out, and the water pumped out, and the *Huascar* proved a useful prize to the Chilians.

But they could not bring the brave *Grau* to life again!





The Black Dog of Scarton.

HAVE you ever gone home rather tired, perhaps a little cross, and been met by some pleasant surprise, that has chased your fatigue, routed your ill humour, and made you as amiable as you were before disagreeable? No doubt you have, and so can imagine how I looked and felt on the occasion upon which I have the honour to introduce myself to your acquaintance.

How well I remember my delight, as my mother met me, holding in her hand a letter, the agreeable contents of which were reflected in her pleasant smile. "Is it from uncle?" I asked, breathlessly. "Yes! You are to go down there next week, and stay a fortnight." Whereupon I forgot that during the day I had lost my pocket handkerchief, upset an ink bottle into my lap, and broken my penknife.

For in those days a holiday *was* a holiday, and I had long looked forward to this of mine. I was a London lad, born and bred; although nearly seventeen years of age I had never even seen the sea, and I have no doubt you would be less excited at the prospect of a journey to Yokohama than was I at the anticipation of a visit to Yorkshire.

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Apart from the personal pleasure I expected to gain from my visit, there were other considerations that made the invitation very agreeable.

Some fourteen years before my story begins my father had died, leaving my mother and myself with but very slender means of support. He had been unfortunate in certain mining speculations, and everything had gone wrong with him. His elder brother, less adventurous, and more fortunate, had grown rich as we had grown poor. A certain coolness, not to say estrangement, had arisen between the two families—my uncle had tendered unwelcome advice, my father had rejected and resented it. My mother had shared his resentment, and when left a widow, declined somewhat hastily and ungraciously my uncle's offer of counsel and assistance. But as years passed, and the cost of my education and maintenance increased, and the need of making some provision for my future became more pressing, the poor lady's heart failed her, although her pride still stood in the way of her making any appeal to her brother-in-law.

I had obtained a clerkship at a very small salary in an insurance office, and we were just managing to make both ends meet, when suddenly, and without any warning, in came my uncle one fine morning, and completely won my mother's heart by his kindly manner and genial demeanour.

He had come to London upon some legal business, and had only resolved to call as he was on the point of returning. He evidently was not prepared to see us in so humble a dwelling, and when he found that we not only kept no servant, but that my mother actually let part of the small house we occupied, and herself attended on her lodgers, he rated her somewhat strongly for not having acquainted him with our circumstances.

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On leaving, he had expressed an intention of inviting me down to spend a fortnight with him, when some alterations he was having made in his house were completed. The invitation had been so long delayed that we began to apprehend he had forgotten his promise, but the letter just received removed our fears on this score, and made us both very happy.

Our preparations were soon made. I obtained leave of absence from my office, and with many injunctions from my dear mother to remember that my cousins had lived all their lives in the country, and that I should be careful not to presume too much on my superior acquirements and advantages, I started on my first railway journey, for my first holiday. Poor dear mother! We had been so much together, and she was so fond of me, that in her love and ignorance she believed me the finest, cleverest fellow of my age in England, and I, foolish boy that I was, more than half shared her opinion.

During my journey I occupied myself in thinking of my cousins, and wondering how I should entertain them. I had committed to memory several nice pieces of poetry to repeat to them at intervals between my descriptions of the wonderful sights of London, nearly all of which I had seen—from the outside. I believe I looked upon myself as a missionary of civilisation dropping among these young rustic savages, and took pleasure in imagining the awe and interest with which they, dwelling, as they did, twenty miles from any market town, would listen to my glowing descriptions of the wonders of the great metropolis. My uncle had acknowledged ("almost boasted," said my mother) that his children had been to the village school only, and were not likely to grow up cleverer than their parents. That they had not advanced far on the way of literary composition was also evident, if the

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following letter, enclosed with my uncle's invitation, were to be taken as a specimen :—

“DEAR COZEN ARTHUR,

Father says your coming here for a fortnight, and we shall be glad to see you. He says you will be hear about 3, and some of us will come to meet you. He says me and you are the same age, but he expects I am a bigger fellow than you. Johnny's too years yonger than you are, and he's nearly as big as me. Ife never been to Lundon. I think that's all till I see you. Emily sends her love.

“WILLIAM TREHERNE.”

Before I had half completed my plans for propitiating my uncle, impressing my cousins, and distinguishing myself, the train drew up at the station where I was to alight. Clever fellow though I might be, I felt as I got out of the train, and found myself standing on the platform with my box by my side, that I was certainly inexperienced in travelling, and for the first time in my life felt very much alone in the world.

The train had sped on its way, the few passengers who had got out with me had quickly dispersed. I and my box alone remained. While I was yet looking round somewhat bewildered, a tall, elegant girl came from the booking-office towards me.

“Are you my cousin Arthur?” she said.

“Yes,” I replied, looking, I fear, very much like a fool.

“Are you Emily?”

“Yes! Emily Treherne. But don't look so frightened at me. Willy is coming presently to meet us, but I got pa to let me bring Pincher and the basket for you, and I slipped off while Master Will was feeding his rabbits. Come along! Mr. Finch will send your box on by the carrier this evening, won't you, Mr. Finch?”

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"Certainly, Miss Treherne," said Mr. Finch, the station-master, bowing very respectfully; and Miss Emily, smiling with the grace and self-possession of a princess, led me out of the station to the high road, where "Pincher and the basket" awaited us.

Pincher was a vicious-looking black pony, with a long mane and tail, and with more bloodshot white to his eyes than any pony I ever saw before or since.

Emily rubbed his head caressingly.

"Come along, Arthur," she said, "and make friends with Pincher."

As an amiable overture I accordingly attempted to pat Pincher's nose, when the ugly brute put back his ears, rolled his vicious-looking eyes, and made such pretences of snapping at me, that I, all unused to such a ferocious-looking animal, making a hasty retreat, fell in a most undignified manner on my back in the ditch at the side of the road.

"Don't be frightened of Pincher, Arthur," said my cousin, reproachfully. "Poor Pincher! Poor old man! Did he run away from you?"

And the brute nodded his head up and down, as if implying that I had, and thereby wounded his feelings excessively.

Emily and I got into the chaise.

"Will you drive?" said she.

I declined promptly, and could see I was rapidly falling to zero in her estimation.

I was sadly crestfallen; in all my rehearsals I had never rehearsed a scene like this. If I had thought of my cousin Emily at all, it had been as an awkward rustic girl in a pinafore, with her finger in her mouth, timidly admiring her



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gentleman cousin from London. Now I was admiring her, and she, if I mistook not, was laughing at me.

Pincher trotted along gaily, and Emily pointed out to me the places of interest by which we passed. There, on our left hand, once stood a Druidical grove, from the tumuli around which, even to the present day, bones, weapons, and fragments of pottery were frequently dug up. On our right was the bay where the Scandinavian Rovers used to land, and after devastating all the neighbouring country, bear to their ships the hastily-gathered spoil. Here was a holy well, still said to be endowed with the power of working miraculous cures. Here again was the arena of one of the last battles fought between the Royalists and the soldiers of the Commonwealth; and here the ruins of the abbey in which Robin Hood once held revelry, having gained admission in the guise of the Abbot and some of his monks, who had fallen prisoners to the outlaw.

"But here's Willie," broke off Emily, in the middle of one of her legends; and looking up I saw a youth, who, to do him justice, looked as well on horseback as his sister did as charioteer.

He greeted me frankly and pleasantly, and, probably, noticing that I looked admiringly at his horse, asked me if I liked riding. Only thinking of my pleasant ride by the side of Emily, I answered warmly that I did exceedingly—which was true enough in the sense I meant it.

"We'll give you a mount to-morrow," he said; and a few minutes afterwards we entered the gateway of Treherne Lodge, and my pleasant drive came to an end.

My uncle and aunt stood at the door to meet me. My uncle rubbed his hands and laughed heartily. I thought at

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first he was laughing at me, but I found out afterwards it was only a habit he had, and that he was nearly always laughing, as it seemed, from pure overflow of good humour. My aunt, on the other hand, never laughed, and if she smiled, smiled as if she were sorry for it. She stood and looked at me so mournfully and pityingly, that between the apparently uncalled-for merriment of the one and melancholy of the other, I felt quite abashed and uncomfortable.

My other cousins, Johnny and Freddy, came in, Johnny very much alike to his brother Willie, and Fred, a most unprepossessing-looking urchin of about seven years of age, petted and spoiled by his mother, laughed at, of course, by his father, impartially cuffed by the rest of the family, but wholly ungovernable and irrepressible.

"There's funny shoes!" was his first greeting to me, pointing down at my feet; "he's got his mother's boots on."

"You mustn't mind him, Arthur," said Mrs. Treherne, sighing deeply. "Emily, you shall *not* box the child's ears like that."

At last Freddy was got rid of, and the rest of us sat down to dinner. My journey had given me a good appetite, and I should have enjoyed my meal had it not been for a parting kick Freddy gave me at leaving, and the depressing influence of Mrs. Treherne, who kept on repeating that I looked very delicate, and that if she were my mother she should not like to let me out of her sight. The rest of the party were in great good humour, and my evident chagrin seemed, I thought, only to contribute to their merriment.

We went to bed early, and in the solitude of my little room I sat and thought how far short I had fallen of my anticipated importance in the Treherne family. I might be a very clever,

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talented lad, but, evidently, these relations did not appreciate my merit, and when I came to ask myself what my special aptitude was, I could give no satisfactory answer. Reviewing the events of the evening, I could see that I had endeavoured to assume a certain superiority which there was nothing to warrant. I had sense enough to see that I had been silly, so there was still some hope for me.

One friend at least I had made. This was Carlo, a young black Newfoundland dog, who, after submitting me to a sniffing scrutiny, had been apparently satisfied with the result, and conceived a great liking for me. This I valued the more because he was Emily's dog, and a great favorite with his mistress.

On the morning after my arrival Mrs. Treherne or Freddy did not come down to breakfast, but their absence did not lessen my enjoyment of the meal. It was a beautiful day, and I found, with some apprehension, that a ride on horseback was to be the first event in the programme.

"You know you said you liked riding," said Willie.

And I was too foolish to explain that I had never crossed a horse's back in my life.

"Where do you intend going?" asked Mr. Treherne.

"To the moor," said Emily; "we can have such a glorious canter out there."

The four horses were brought round; I watched Willie and Johnny mount, and I managed to get into my saddle without any special display of awkwardness. The road was wide, and my companions were discussing plans for my entertainment. The horses walked gently abreast; I let the reins lay on my steed's neck, and if it were not that my trousers *would* keep getting up my legs, I should have felt very comfortable.

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But my peace was of short duration.

We reached the edge of a moor where the purple heather spread out before us for many a level mile.

"Now for it!" said Johnny.

And away he went, closely followed by his brother and sister.

I should have been well content to remain behind, but my horse was differently disposed, and darted after his comrades, with whom he was quickly abreast. Alas! for his rider! My trousers went up to my knees, my hat to the back of my head, and I myself was jerked on to the horse's neck, where I clung for a while, a piteous and absurd spectacle, finally rolling off, much shaken, but, luckily, unhurt.

My cousins, when they found me uninjured, laughed heartily at my mishap.

Emily tried to look grave, but could not.

"Get up again," she said, "and we will walk steadily home."

But I did not choose to run the risk of again cutting such a ridiculous figure, and said I would not ride any more.

"Why, you're not frightened?" said Emily.

Her words and tone so wounded me that I simply said, "Yes, I am," without explaining that all I was afraid of was looking foolish before her.

"But you said you liked riding," said Willie.

I was too much annoyed to offer any explanation, so I sulked and said nothing.

The day thus badly begun did not improve as it progressed. Emily was angry with me, and I was angry with myself. Freddy having heard of my misadventure, and having provoked a laugh by clinging round the back of a chair in imitation of me as I clung to the horse's neck, repeated his illustration whenever I chanced to be present. The other

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boys scarcely cared to conceal their contempt for me, though, at their father's suggestion, they challenged me to a game they called "putting the stone," in which, from awkwardness and inexperience, rather than from want of strength, I failed almost as signally as in my first essay at horsemanship.

The next morning, at breakfast-time, Freddy asked me "If I was not glad to be loose?" and upon my asking for an explanation, replied:

"Father says when you're at home you're always tied to your mother's apron-string;" adding, "if I was tied to *my* mother I should kick her till she let me go."

And I had no doubt he would.

It was a sad come-down from the anticipated pleasure of my holiday, to find myself laughed at by everybody. Even Emily, although she was very kind and thoughtful, evidently regarded me as a milksop.

My greatest comfort at this time was to go out in the fields or garden with Carlo, who was always ready to follow me, and, with his head resting on my knees, would look up at me with a world of meaning and comfort in his dark brown eyes. I used to tell the dog all my troubles as I could have told no one else. He used to hear me patiently, and wag his heavy tail, slowly, but comfortingly, in response. Strange as it may seem, I felt aided by his dumb sympathy, and never doubted that I possessed it. We grew greater friends every day of my stay. I do not know what part I could have played or want I supplied in the dog's life, but he could not be kept away from me, and followed me in preference to any other of the family. I had a boatswain's metal whistle which Emily had given me, and whenever I blew this, Carlo was after me. He had been trained to come to its sound, which could be heard

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at a considerable distance ; and we often amused ourselves by calling him from some remote height, whence we could see him leaping walls, scrambling through hedges, and swimming over brooks, until he stood by our side, panting with haste and pleasure.

There were two or three wet days during my visit that I passed very pleasantly. Emily taught me chess, and when we were not playing we read to each other, or I told her some of the old romances, of which my head was full, for her old country stories, half legendary, half historical. These were agreeable hours, except when Master Freddy would find us out, and make some of his unpleasantly personal observations.

But the climax of my troubles was reached when the weather cleared, and some mischievous imp prompted the suggestion that it was a glorious day for a sail. I had never been on the sea, but I had heard others describe the horrors of seasickness, and I knew if such a mishap was possible to anyone it would inevitably happen to me. But—foolish boy that I was—I had not the courage to avow my fears, and their cause was misunderstood. My evident disinclination for the trip being attributed to fear of the water, Willie good-naturally proposed to forego the excursion. I was at first pleased at the suggestion, but seeing that Emily looked serious, I asked her in all good faith, "What was the matter?" "I hate cowards," was the petulant reply ; whereat I instantly jumped into the boat, and would pretty well as readily have jumped into the water, so angry was I, and so hurt 'at her manner.

We glided merrily away. Emily steered, Willie and Johnny attended to the sail, while Freddy and I played the part of passengers. I began to think I had been premature in my fears, and unjustifiable in my anger. I spoke to Emily, and

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she, I thought, seemed sorry for her impatient speech, and anxious to atone for it by a more kindly manner; even Freddy forbore his customary pranks, and we all chatted gaily together. But after a while, as we got further from the shelter of the cliffs, and felt the effect of the breeze blowing from landward, our little skiff began to heave portentously, and something within me to vibrate in response. The talking and laughing still went on around me; but I could neither talk nor laugh. I tried to smile in reply to my companion's observations, but I felt conscious that it was a ghastly smile—a hollow mockery of mirth. And when Freddy exclaimed, "My eye! don't Arthur look queer," I abandoned myself to my fate; and my sufferings were even worse than I had imagined.

Some people, I believe, are never sea-sick, others merely have a temporary attack of the malady, and are presently as well as ever; but I am of the unhappy few whose troubles in this wise are severe and long continued. With me, alas!—

"Long, long after the tempest is passed,
Rolls the turbid and turbulent billow."

It was in vain that they returned to smooth water. Though the violent paroxysm of my sickness abated, I still remained colourless, limp and utterly prostrated.

When we landed, I staggered home with the assistance of my cousins, who strove in vain to stifle the merriment my ridiculous appearance provoked in them.

And now the term of my visit drew near the end; but one more day remained.

My cousins had exhausted their resources in attempts to please me, and find something in which I could share the pleasure of their sport.

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We were taking a quiet walk together along the top of the cliffs, and were all, I think, in rather low spirits. My cousins, who were the kindest-hearted fellows in the world, felt sorry that they had failed in their efforts to entertain me, and had been, perhaps, too ready to laugh at my ignorance and inexperience. Emily, too, was sad; and I, above all, was crestfallen, for I had failed in all that I had tried to do; had seemed ungracious and unthankful; had been awkward and artificial where I wished to be easy and natural; worst of all, I feared that my going would be a relief to my entertainers, that none of them would wish to see me again, and that if they spoke or thought at all of me, it would be with derision and disregard.

The footway was, in places, perilously near to the edge of the cliff, and all along its margin, at short intervals, were little white mounds and patches of chalk. Willie explained to me that these were for the guidance of the coastguardmen in their nightly patrol, and served to mark the boundaries of the path beyond which it was dangerous to tread. As he spoke of the lonely perilous walk taken by these men, a scarcely repressed shudder passed through us all, and each of my cousins expressed their dread horror of such a watch.

"For you see," said Willie, "a single false step, a trip, or a stumble, and away goes the poor fellow headlong over the cliff; or an enemy lies in wait for him and knocks him over, knowing that the murder will be set down as accident. And then the lonely horror of staying through the dark night, hearing nothing but the cries of the sea birds, seeing nothing but what the imagination conjures up, for there is scarcely a nook, cranny, or headland of this coast but has its legend of disaster and death, at which we can laugh when we are all

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together here in the bright sunshine, but were I alone in the black darkness of such a night as this will be, I should hear the shrieks of drowning men in every sea-gull's cry, should see spectral forms dogging my every step, and all the unburied dead holding carnival around."

"Hush! Willie," said Emily; "you make my flesh creep to hear you. They must be brave fellows who face all this, and must, one would think, be good kind fellows also, or else their consciences would make them afraid."

"Well," said Johnny laughing, "I don't think I'm a very bad fellow, or an unkind fellow, but I know I should be afraid."

"And I," "and I," "and I," broke from the other members of the group.

"Wouldn't you be afraid, Cousin Arthur?" said Freddy, slyly; and the smile with which the question was received by my other cousins, showed what a coward they considered me.

"Yes," said I, thoughtfully; and shortly afterwards we returned home.

The path of which we had been speaking led from Treherne past the coastguard station two miles away, and from thence to Scarton Bay, three miles farther on. The district had formerly been a notorious haunt of smugglers, and although of late years the vigilance of the revenue officers had lessened the chances of a successful run, it was said that attempts to elude their watchfulness still continued to be made.

The coast, as I have said, was wild and rugged, and between my uncle's house and Scarton only the coastguard station intervened. It was a gaunt, cheerless walk, even by daylight, and the thought of traversing it by night was anything but agreeable, for I was endowed with a vivid

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imagination, and there was no danger, probable or improbable, the fear of which was not present to me.

And yet I had determined to tread that path that very night.

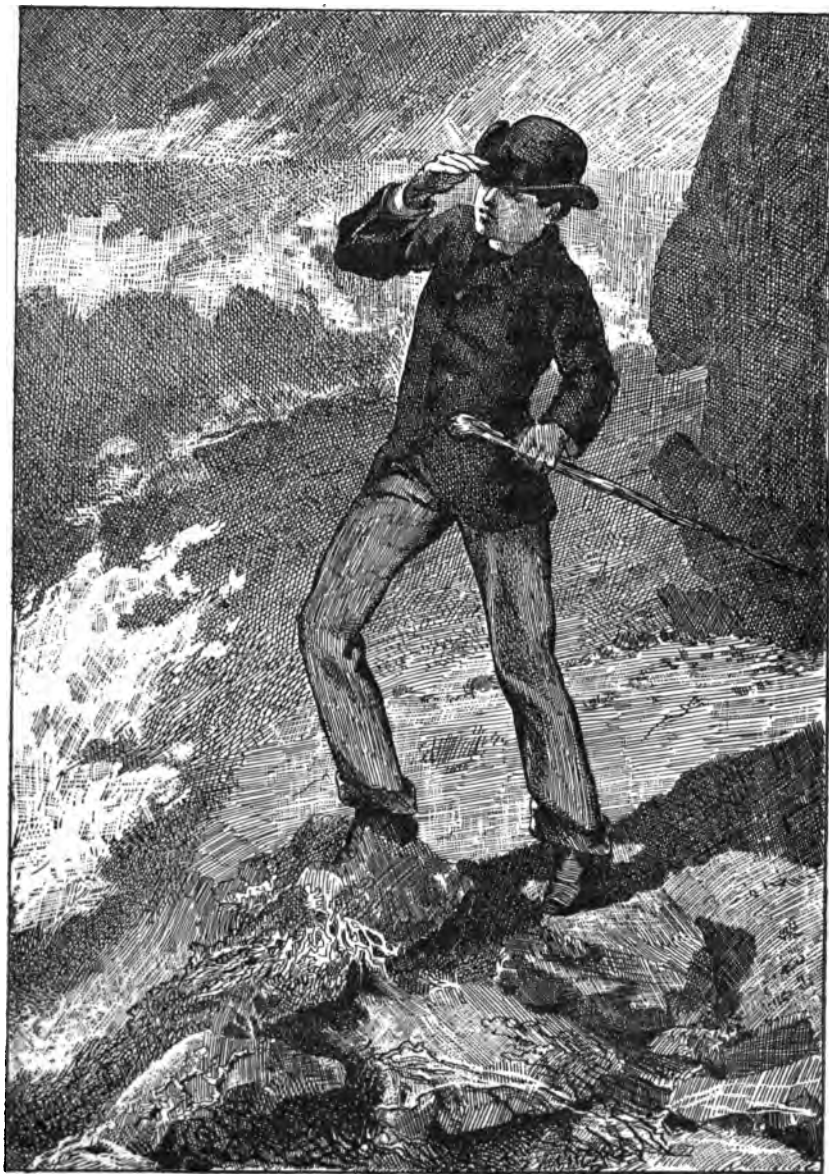
We dined at two o'clock, and shortly after dinner I slipped away unnoticed, merely leaving word with one of the servants that if not home to tea I should be in before bed-time. A carrier's cart passed Treherne Lodge on its way to Scarton every afternoon, and I got the driver to give me a lift, for I had never been to the place before, and although I knew the path by the cliff led direct to it, I was resolved not to go on that path until night had set in, and I should be able to prove, by facing all its dangers, that I was not quite the coward my cousins supposed.

I had gone about a mile, when Carlo, whose vigilance I had been careful to elude, came bounding along by the side of the cart. It was in vain I tried to drive him back; he merely got beyond the reach of a stone's throw, and preserving the same distance between himself and the cart, trotted leisurely after us.

We reached Scarton Bay just as night was falling. I ascertained where the footpath back commenced, and then took some little refreshment at the "Scarton Arms," a small hostelry kept by a tenant of my uncle's, to whom Carlo was well known. I made the landlord promise to keep the dog in for a couple of hours after I had left, by which time I expected to be at Treherne Lodge, where Carlo, I knew, could find his way back readily enough.

It was about seven o'clock when I started on my homeward journey. I am not ashamed to confess that at the last my heart almost failed me to the extent of taking the dog with me.

It was a miserable night, dark and lowering; coming out



"The path was narrow, winding and difficult."—Page 237.

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from the bright cheerful parlour of the inn, the darkness was doubly intensified. As I went across the yard to the stable where Carlo was to be temporarily incarcerated, the poor brute, as if anticipating some unpleasantness, kept rubbing his head against me, every now and then putting his fore paws on my breast, and uttering a low whimper, as if perplexed and troubled. But I had made up my mind to go back alone ; and so in a few minutes Carlo was locked in the stable, and I had fairly started on the path by the cliff.

When I had got a little used to the darkness, my walk did not at first appear so dangerous or difficult as I had imagined it. The village children, probably, were in the habit of following this road for some little distance ; at any rate for the first half mile or so it was a broad, straight way, with a respectable margin between it and the edge of the cliff. But at about a mile from the bay the path was intersected by a ravine, getting down and up which I found lonesome work enough. I believe had the tide been up I should have gone right into the water. Luckily for me it was not, and when I had descended I found myself safe on a bed of dank sea-weed, with the moan and thud of the waves unpleasantly near to me. I groped my way up the opposite side, and after two or three slips and scratches reached the top of the cliffs again ; but now the path was narrow, winding and difficult. The chalk heaps began to stand me in good stead, for, dark though the night was, I could see them when I could see nothing else, and I picked my way carefully and fearfully from one to the other.

I made but slow progress at this time. The wind, which had been very high all the evening, now increased in violence, and blew with such fury that I occasionally feared I should be blown right away to sea, and had to crouch down on the

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ground until some of the more boisterous gusts had spent themselves.

Presently it began to rain, and to rain in such a fashion as I have never seen equalled before or since. As I drifted helplessly before the storm I came upon a rude erection of turf and furze, constructed, I afterwards found, as a shelter for the coastguardmen. I got on the leeward side of this, and crouching under the bushes, with which it was overhung, found myself comparatively comfortable, and contented to wait until the storm had abated ; indeed, I was glad of a rest, for the combined exertion and excitement had fatigued me very much, so it was that, despite the violence of the wind and rain, I presently fell into a sound sleep, which must have lasted between three and four hours.

When I awoke the rain had ceased, but the wind still blew, and the night was dark and cold. It was some little time before I could recollect where I was, or how I came there. My first impulse, indeed, was to go to sleep again, but through my semi-unconsciousness the murmur of voices seemed sounding in my ears, and, after a hard struggle with my drowsiness, I fairly roused myself and listened.

It was no dream. There, separated from me only by the screen of sods against which I was leaning, were men speaking freely and loudly, and although the broad dialect in which they spake (but which I shall not attempt to reproduce) made many words unintelligible to me, while the wind descending with a wild swoop sometimes bore away a sentence, I still heard enough to fill me with affright, and to convince me that the dangers around me were not imaginary, but real.

"I don't altogether like it, mates," said one of the men ;
"this setting fire to Treherne's stacks, with the chance of

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the fire spreading to his house, goes against me, somehow. In the old days, when we ran a cargo we did it fair and square, on the darkest night we could get. If the officers came in on us we made off; or if we couldn't get off without fighting we fought 'em. Sometimes a man got his head broke, or an ugly slash from a cutlass; but we never thought of burning people in their beds, or getting behind a man and pitching him off the cliff without word or warning."

"Dick! you're a fool," was the reply. "Who wants to burn anybody in their bed, or throw anyone off the cliff? We're in this business, all of us, and we mean to carry it through, and do it in the safest way we can. If we pull through it's twenty pounds a-piece to every man of us; if we're caught it's a long bout in jail, with, perhaps, a spell in hospital to begin with. I owe no man a grudge, but I'd rather a dozen Trehermes were burnt in their beds, or fifty coastguardmen dropped over the cliff, than I'd put my own heels or neck in danger. But what harm can come of it? If all goes well, in a few minutes they'll have one or two of Treherne's stacks in a blaze, but the fire won't reach the house, for no sooner do the stacks begin to flame but the whole force at the station will go down to put the fire out. While they're at that we signal the lugger, land our cargo, and stow it away. We're all the richer, and no one in the world the wiser."

"But suppose one of the officers comes along before?"

"Well, then, over he goes. It's all the fortune of war, and maybe he'll take one of us with him. If it should be me you know the lights to show the lugger. First three of a row, then two over one, then one over two, and then down with you to the creek to meet the boats."

"Aye! aye! Dick," said the man who had not before

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spoken. "I don't much care which way it goes. I've no great love for Treherne, or the revenue men either, but I'd rather there was no lives lost. I don't want to see the Black Dog of Scarton again."

"Save us! No!" said the first speaker.

"I'd rather face a dozen men than one devil, myself," said Dick, thoughtfully; "but while we're waiting you might tell us that story, for though I've heard a dozen versions of it, I'm not sure that I've ever yet heard the right one."

"Well, I can tell it you as it were told to me by my cousin, whose father was one of the party concerned in the business. You know it was before we had these gentry at the station quartered on us, and when it was easier to earn a bit by wreckage and such like. There were some of the lads fond of showing lights just hereaway, when the wind blowing nor'ard had maybe thrown a homeward-bound out of her course. Many a captain thought it was the light off Harbour Point, and bearing down for it, ran his vessel on the Parson's Nose, as they call the sunken reef out yonder. In the morning the beach would be strewn with his crew and his cargo, and many a nice picking fell to the share of the lads who set the trap. It chanced, one night, while three of them were busy keeping up the light, and every now and then passing a shade before it, that it might seem to revolve the same as the harbour light, all of a sudden they heard a bos'n's whistle, and a man, followed by a large black dog, made at them. It would seem that a Bristol trader, misled by the light, had gone to pieces on the reef. This one man and his dog had swam to shore, had come up the creek below, and made for the light. I reckon that when he saw what was going on, he knew how his mates had been lured to their death, and without stopping

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to think how the odds were against him, ran at the first man he saw, and tried to throttle him. He pinned one man, and the dog pinned another; my uncle, who was the third, seeing that his comrade was getting the worst of it, hit the newcomer over the back of the head with a loaded stick he used to carry. The poor fellow was stunned with the blow, and before he had time to recover, they pitched him clean over the cliff.

"The dog, who by this time had nearly worried the life out of the man he tackled, no sooner saw his master go, than with a shrill bark and howl he sprang over the cliff after him; and every one of the three left, thought that they had seen the last of both dog and man, for it was high tide, and the water was running twelve feet deep at the foot of the cliff. But when low tide and the morning came, and all the village turned out to see what spoil the night had brought them, there lay the big black dog on his master's body, which, God knows how, it had dragged out of the water, to bring his murderers to justice.

"The three who had had a hand in the black business would have stoned the dog off, or killed it; but others took to the poor beast, and would let no hurt be done it. The dog gave them no end of trouble, for though gentle as a lamb with the rest, no sooner did one of they three come near him, but he tore at him like a mad thing. The body was taken away, and the dog followed it; he lay outside the house where it lay waiting for the inquest, and would let anyone but the three pat or stroke him.

"My uncle and the other two men were frightened of the dog, and the notice he drew upon them. Shea, whom the murdered man had grappled, was a poor nervous creature, and never left his house until the dead body was buried.

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That night he made up his mind to go to the beershop and hear what was said about things. He had just put his foot outside his door, when dash! went something at him, knocking him over, and fastening upon him. It was the black dog, who would assuredly then and there have worried him, but that some neighbours happened to be passing near at the time, and hearing his cries, succeeded in dragging him away more dead than alive.

"All through that night the frightened man could hear the dog, as he howled at his door, as if crying for vengeance upon him. My uncle, although he did not go outside his door, heard and was terrified by the same noise. Night after night this went on, until Shea could bear it no longer. He rose one night, when the moon was shining brightly, and through the window he could see his enemy crouched along in front of the door, as if prepared to spring at him. Shea took his gun (he was an old poacher, and a sure shot), the weapon was heavily loaded with slugs; he raised the window gently, took careful aim, and fired. When the smoke had cleared away, the dog was gone. Shea never doubted that he had killed it; but the next night the howling went on as before, and so it continued until the man, unable to endure it, went to the nearest magistrate and confessed the murder. On this, my uncle and he were arrested, and lodged in the county jail. There, too, the dog followed them, and though often driven away, would come again in the dead of the night, and give one ear-piercing howl that rang through every cell in the prison. At the end of a week Shea was delirious, and died in the infirmary, screaming to the attendants to 'keep off the dog!'

"In the confusion and excitement into which the keepers of

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the jail were thrown, my uncle contrived to make his escape. It was supposed that he was on his way to the coast in hopes to get off in some fishing-vessel, and that in the darkness he fell off the cliff. Anyway, his body was washed on shore the next morning, not far from the spot where the murdered man had been found. There were jags and tears about his face and neck ; it was said at the inquest that these were probably caused by the rocks and reefs against which he had been washed, but some of those who saw the wounds said they looked more as if made by the fangs of a hound, and never doubted but they were the work of the Black Dog of Scarton. The dog was no more heard at the houses or the jail ; but many a time when any black business has been afoot by land or sea, the bos'n's whistle and the dog's howl have been heard hereaways, and there be those that say they have not only heard, but seen both man and beast."

During the narration of this legend, the wind, which at its commencement had been loud and boisterous, had subsided, and the night was calm and still. The speaker had gradually lowered his voice, until at the conclusion of his story it had almost sank into a whisper. The silence and the surroundings gave to the tale a grim horror, which it is impossible for my readers to realize. For some moments no one spoke or stirred, and I was as silent and awe-stricken as the rest.

Suddenly, from just below us, came a prolonged howl, the unmistakeable cry of a dog !

"Save us ! What's that ?" cried one of the men, and the three crouched together in abject fear. I, too—I say it with shame—was for a moment terrified ; and then, recognising the well-known voice of my faithful Carlo, there flashed upon me a happy inspiration to work upon the superstitious fears of the

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cowering wretches before me. Stepping out from my concealment I advanced towards them, blowing shrilly on the bo'sn's whistle I always carried in my pocket. In another instant Carlo came dashing up, uttering short, deep bays of joy, leaping up to my shoulder, and sprinkling the ground with copious showers of salt water from his shaggy coat.

Uttering cries of terror, the three conscience-stricken rascals rushed away in the direction I had come from, and their forms were quickly lost in the darkness.

I had sufficient presence of mind to stand perfectly still for a few seconds, judging that by doing so I should the better confirm the fears of any of the fugitives who might happen to take a parting glance at the object of their fears. When the sounds of their footsteps had died away, I pressed eagerly forward, in the direction of my uncle's house. My eyes had become somewhat familiarized with the darkness, and my fears for others had effectually overcome all fears for myself. Often since, when visiting in daylight the path over which I then passed, I have shuddered and marvelled how I trod it in safety, I have again and again thanked the Providence which upheld my feet.

I rarely looked down on the way I was treading, for all my gaze and all my thought was bent there before me, where I feared each moment to see the outburst of fire, telling that the work of the incendiary had been accomplished. But still we pressed on; and still nothing but silence and darkness surrounded us. And now I reached and recognised the headland where we had been in the morning, and where my foolish resolve to undertake this perilous walk had been formed. And now hope beat strongly within my breast, for I knew I was not more than a mile from home. A mile! That

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meant barely ten minutes. Yes! I should surely be in time. Thank God! thank God! And then my heart stood still, and the blood in my veins turned icy cold, for I saw two tiny, flickering lights spring up in the distance just where I knew my uncle's farmyard stood. I closed my eyes, I lost consciousness; I suppose 'twas but for a moment, for when I looked again the flames appeared no larger, but still danced and flickered below me, while I, spell-bound, stood waiting for the conflagration of which I judged them to be the heralds.

A minute or two passed before I became aware that the lights were not stationary, but advancing towards me; my fears temporarily allayed, I again hastened on my way, though still far from confident whether I was about to meet friend or foe. But Carlo soon solved my doubts; he had for some time shown by sundry stoppages, growls, and pricking up of ears, his consciousness that some one was approaching; but when at length he bounded forward with a joyous bark of recognition, I knew the perils of the night were over, and that I was with friends once more.

"Oh! Arthur! What a fright you've given us!" said my cousin Willie, who was the first to meet me; in another moment my uncle had me by the hand. "Arthur! Arthur!" he said, "this is very wrong, very wicked of you; but," and here his voice broke down, "God bless you! I am very glad to see you safe again."

I don't know exactly what answers I made them, but it was something in the nature of an appeal to hurry back and save the homestead from fire.

"Fire!" cried my uncle, in a tone of surprise. "Why! What do you know of that business?"

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What I knew the reader already knows. My story was quickly told, and then I heard that when I had not returned by nightfall, it had been surmised that I had probably gone to the market town to buy some little souvenir of Yorkshire, and even so late as nine o'clock, none of the family, except Emily, were really disquieted or alarmed by my absence. She alone suspected the foolish errand upon which I had gone, and after she had retired to her bedroom, still kept watch to hear if I returned. In her uneasiness she went to the window and looked out upon the night, when her attention was attracted by a train of sparks running along the ground toward the stacks in the farmyard; her quick instinct saw the danger immediately, and she ran down stairs, through the garden, and into the farmyard just in time to pull away and extinguish the fuse before it reached the straw and combustibles that had been heaped at the foot of the stack. Then she returned to the house and gave the alarm.

Taking his pistols, my uncle, together with Willie and one of the farm hands, made careful search about the grounds, but could find no one. The fuse proved to be composed of strands of hemp, which had been steeped in a solution of saltpetre, and laid from the stack to and over the wall before the yard gates were closed.

By this time my absence had excited considerable apprehension, and my uncle, to whom Emily now for the first time told her suspicion of my purpose, determined to go in search of me along the path by the cliff, and it was the lights borne by his party that I had mistaken for the outbreak of the fire.

We found my cousins anxiously expecting our return. Emily was the first to greet us. She ran up to me, threw her arms round my neck and kissed me, whereupon I felt far more

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than repaid for all the frights and fatigues of the night. True, she scolded me well afterwards, but that went for nothing. We were all very much excited by recent events, and none of us thought of going to bed. My aunt and Freddy having retired early were still peacefully sleeping, and we had no desire to wake them.

At my earnest request nothing was said to Mrs. Treherne of my adventure until after my departure the next day, and so I had the pleasure of parting on kind and friendly terms with them all. My cousins, who had on such light grounds set me down as a coward, were equally ready for no better reasons to extol me as a hero, and a hero I believe I ever afterwards appeared to them, although the reader and I know I had done very little to deserve such a reputation.

My uncle, who had a great aversion to being involved in any legal business or criminal prosecution, resolved to say nothing of the conversation I had heard on the cliff, or of the plot that had been so providentially defeated. He merely told the officer in charge at the coastguard station of the attempt that had been made to set fire to the stacks, and suggested that its object might have been to divert the attention of the coastguardmen. The hint probably stimulated their vigilance, for a night or two afterwards they captured a party of smugglers in the act of "running" a cargo of spirits and tobacco from a vessel, doubtless the one it had been proposed to signal upon the night of my memorable walk.

Among those apprehended, I have reason to believe were included some at least of the rascals I had overheard, for on leaving the dock, one of the prisoners was heard to say to another, "We might have known it 'd turn out badly when we saw the 'Black Dog of Scarton'."

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I got home safely, and my mother was delighted to have me back again, I too was glad to be with her once more, but somehow, a new interest had sprung up in my life, and I found myself often thinking of my cousins, and what they (especially she) were doing and thinking in far off Yorkshire. I had brought with me to my mother a letter from Mr. Treherne, in which he spoke of me in terms of such praise and kindness, as brought tears into the dear lady's eyes. He said that all his family had become much attached to me, that I must visit them as often as I could get leave of absence, and he further promised that he would look after and provide for me as one of his own children.

So it came to pass that I was enabled to adopt the law as a profession, and having a certain incentive of my own to study and hard work, in time I achieved sufficient success and distinction to cause my uncle not to regret having given me a helping hand.

There was one bar to my happiness; I coveted Carlo, and my cousin Emily would not part with him. So I had to marry her and take the pair.

He is old and lethargic now, and only desires to lie peaceably in the sun, or before the fire, living on the reputation of having so successfully acted the part of "The Black Dog of Scarton."





A Cruise with a Pirate.

CHAPTER I.

ON BOARD THE "SNAPPING TURTLE."

YES, you may go with them, boy," said the lieutenant, and without any brag or nonsense, I really was pleased, though the expedition I asked to be allowed to make one of, was not of a nature to charm everybody. For the cutting out of a pirate is not an entirely satisfactory process. He is perfectly aware, that if caught, he will certainly be hanged, and should he be a logical pirate, this fact causes him to fight tooth and nail to escape strangulation; death by bullet, or even by sword in hot blood, being decidedly preferable. It is true that some pirates, not being logical, surrender when they find resistance useless, but even these are somewhat hard to convince of that same uselessness. Then should you fail, and be left alive on the piratical deck,

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vivisection would be quite a treat to the miseries which you may reckon upon; you must go to Fennimore Cooper's books, Fox's Martyrs, and records of the Inquisition for an adequate idea of them. Unless you prefer to run a pin down the quick of one of your nails to obtain a practical notion—what? That very idea turned you queer? Then don't dwell upon it when you next start to cut out a pirate. Perhaps the worst of all is, that after the risk run, to say nothing of the worry of hunting him down, your pirate may not be convicted of his piracy when caught and tried, and your zeal will bring you blame instead of *kudos*.

But all these considerations were far from my mind at the time I am speaking of. In those days I was as romantic as Don Quixote himself, and hitherto I had been the victim of disappointment upon disappointment. My parents were rich, my mother fond, and I was brought up with no more chance of adventure than a drawing-room kitten, or a lap-dog. I pleaded hard to be sent to a public school—that school to which my father had been, and of which I had heard him tell such thrilling anecdotes, which had been supplemented by stories told of the same foundation in eagerly devoured books. My wish was gratified; I cannot recall a practicable one formed in very early childhood which was not. Never shall I forget the feelings of mingled terror and delight with which I approached the new world of fagging, flogging, fighting. But alas, I was born fifty years too late. Fighting had become obsolete; flogging was rare, and rather disgraceful; indeed, though of only average industry, I never incurred the penalty; and fagging had degenerated into a mere farce. Servants did all the real work; I never had to light my master's fire, or clean his boots, or steal, pluck and cook

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poultry for him ; only to lay his breakfast cloth, and make his tea, and sometimes fetch a book, bat, or racquet for him ; and even then he generally *thanked me*. As for bullying, a sixth-form boy did once box my ears when I was very cheeky, but afterwards he treated me to strawberry mess.

I still had the world of fiction to take refuge in, and my favorite author was Captain Marryat. The sea is, and always has been, a romantic affair. The taste for mountains is comparatively modern, but certainly, ever since people wrote poetry, the ocean has appealed to their imagination. It looks so different on different days ; and when the waves are big, and you bathe in them, you feel so utterly powerless. And it makes people sick without any particular reason that anybody seems able to discover, and then makes them better than they were before. And you always wonder what is beyond, as far as you can see, and want to get there. And, however rough it is at the top, one knows that there is eternal calm and utter stillness and silence down in the depths. And all sorts of fearful monsters live and die down there, unknown to man. Or, if one comes up and shows himself for a bit, all who see it had better hold their tongues about the matter, for they will only be counted as liars if they speak. Surely the sea could never be made vulgar, common-place, modern ? And ships must always be different from houses, and sailors unlike other men. Why, their trousers keep up without braces, and their straw hats never blow off, and, however light their clothing in winter, they never look cold. They are never afraid of anything except ghosts and ill omens, and they have no idea whatever of the value of money.

I got wild to leave school and enter the navy, and, as usual, my wish was gratified.

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The necessary studies did not frighten me, as I rather liked mathematics, though having to learn it at school was one of my disappointments. I expected that nothing would be taught there at all but Latin and Greek, and that it would not be necessary to learn more of them than you liked ; also that holidays would be excessively frequent. But all this had been altered, and I had to acquire a good deal of knowledge, including Euclid and Algebra, without the numerous breaks of Saints' days and their eves, which had so much reduced the hours of study in my father's time. As I have said, this was no particular hardship to me of itself, for books of any description rather amused me, and I never could see why anyone who liked a puzzle should hate a problem. But it was common-place, unexciting—not what I expected.

My hopes for something more exciting in my new career rose high when I first put my uniform on, and looked at myself in a pier-glass ; went still higher when, quite alone, I drew and flourished my dirk. I was rather damped when I found myself on board the training-ship. Captain Marryat had said nothing about training-ships. But I found other ardent spirits there who were also imbued with the writings of sea novelists, and we talked of future adventures till my enthusiasm glowed again.

At last the time came when I found myself on board a real ship, and felt that I was actually in Her Majesty's service, and a bit of bulwark protecting my native shores. But where was the midshipman's berth of my fancy ? The cabin we lived in was certainly not very large, but it was comfortable and sweet-smelling. The meals were good, and regularly served. Where was the hard salt beef ? Where were the maggotty biscuits ? My mates behaved themselves like other young

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gentlemen, and practical jokes were rare, and of a mild character. No one cut my hammock down while I was asleep, or tarred my hair, or thrashed me with a rope's end, and foul language was considered "bad form."

I do not think that my nature was ruffianly, and certainly I was not fitted to come best off in a cock-pit of Nelson's days, for though healthy and wiry, I was very small for my age, and must have had the worst of it in the rough-and-tumble life of the last century. And I did not exactly covet pain and discomfort; in short, I did not at all know what I *did* want, but it was something new, strange, and connecting me with my favorite heroes. I did not even suffer from sea-sickness, and though we went to the West Indies, no one died of yellow fever.

There was another thing; in none of the naval stories that I had read was there anything about school and lectures; and we had plenty. There was a little frolic on crossing the line, but nothing at all like what I anticipated.

But had we no storm? Well there, yes, I grant you I was not disappointed. A storm at sea remains as fine a thing as ever it was, and while it lasts you feel as insignificant as you please; indeed all other human beings shrink in importance, and you are almost inclined to doubt if even the captain is as great and glorious a being as you are accustomed to esteem him. But real storms only occur occasionally, which is just as well. They are not bad to read about, and look well in a picture; also when treated musically they are delightful, a storm being a most exhilarating subject for a nautical song. But when it means deprivation of regular meals and sleep, remaining in wet clothes for an indefinite period, and expecting to be drowned all the time, it is not an unalloyed

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pleasure. Still I enjoyed my storms some time after they were over, when memory could dwell upon the grandeur without the sense of present discomfort.

And then we had a bit of active service, but that was another failure, and the worst, because of the expectations raised. I wrote a letter for my friends in case I fell, headed: "The night before going into action." A most heroic letter, which brought tears into my eyes when I read it over; it really seemed a pity that it should be wasted by my not being killed after all. Next day we steamed up a river under the fire of two batteries, neither of which managed to touch us, and which we silenced in about an hour, knocking them all to pieces. Then we shelled and dispersed some groups of armed men seen in the distance, landed and blew up some fortifications without being molested, and the war was over. As a bit of artillery practice, it was all very well, except for the poor fellows who were made butts of, but a fight where all the hitting is done by one of the combatants, is not the sort of episode to set Homer singing.

Altogether, by the time I found myself on board the little *Snapping Turtle* slaver hunting, it was wonderful that the romance was not entirely prosed out of me. We might set some poor niggers free, to get caught again, or help catch others; and if the ships we took were condemned, we should get our share of prize-money; which, in a midshipman's case, is rarely a sum to go wildly excited about. Still, like counters at a penny the dozen, this served to give an interest to the game. But it was not up to Captain Marryat form.

But then came rumours, growing more and more circumstantial and consistent with every fresh inquiry, of a vessel that under guise of being employed in the slave trade,

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neglected no other opportunity of plunder ; in short, there was every reason to believe that there was a pirate on the seas which it was our present duty to patrol. A real live pirate in the latter end of this prosaic nineteenth century ! There was still then something worth living for ; in other words, something to hunt and endeavour to destroy with a clear conscience, nay, with a sense of exceeding meritoriousness ! The worst of it was that the poor pirate had not quite a fair chance ; the *Snapping Turtle*, with her powerful screw, would soon run down the schooner with only her sails to depend upon, fast though she was, especially in those seas where calms are so frequent. And as for armament, why our big gun could easily hammer her to pieces without coming within range of her return ; though certainly that was not quite our commander's style of doing business.

However, such considerations were premature. First of all we had to find this maritime pest, and that was not so easy, where the hunting-ground was a regular labyrinth of small islands, with innumerable bays, where she could lie hid as snugly as possible. It was true that we had a good sleuth-hound, in the person of a civilised Malay, who had owned a store at Artarree (I spell it phonetically, for I never saw it written), a village on the mainland coast, where there was a small harbour. The pirates had run in here, landed, sacked his store in his absence, murdered his wife, children and servants—who were really slaves and property—so that when he returned home he found nothing but ashes and desolation, and, after the first outburst of rage and grief, settled himself to the work of retribution, and offered his services to our commander, assuring him that he knew every plank and spar of the villanous schooner, and could recognise her anywhere

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on the horizon. It was whispered on the coast that he had good reason to do so, and was not entirely innocent of participation in the evil gains of the gang who had at last, with poetical justice, selected him as a victim. It was certain that he had once held a considerable share in the schooner, when she was engaged in the slave trade solely, but he declared that all his connection with her ceased before she passed into the present hands. However that might be, his services were invaluable, for there could be no doubt of his anxiety to find the schooner, and his ability to know her when found, and he was taken on board. For a full week he sat up aloft, like the sweet little cherub, with a long telescope, looking out not for the life of poor Jack indeed, but for lives that he wanted poor Jack to take. He came down at night indeed, and for his dinner, but all other daylight hours found him watching. At last one morning, just at sunrise, he came aft in a great state of excitement and reported that he had sighted the pirate. It was my watch, and turning my glass in the direction to which he pointed, I saw at first the rocky shores of an island, and then not far from the coast I made out a vessel.

"But," said I, in disappointment, "you are out of it altogether. That is not a schooner at all; it is a native-rigged vessel, and the hull is twice as large as the schooner's can be, if she has been properly described."

"That not the one!" cried the excited Malay. "That the ship they plunder; see, schooner port side."

I made it out as he described it. Have you ever seen a spider retiring from the carcass of an insect much larger than itself, the juices of which it had sucked dry? It looked just like that, save that the spider is an ugly creature, while the

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wicked schooner, as she slid away from her prey, was, to a sailor's eye, beautiful enough. I reported the matter; the *Snapping Turtle's* head was put straight for the spot, and in a few minutes the Commander was on the deck. As fine a young fellow as ever stepped, with frank blue eyes, ruddy complexion, and light mutton chop whiskers. He was marvellously good-humoured, and new hands sometimes fancied that they could impose upon him. But just let him catch you in the slightest neglect of duty! His brow grew dark, and his mouth hardened to sternness in a moment, and I'll warrant you would not try it on again. But do your duty cheerfully to the best of your ability, and a pleasanter man you could not sail under.

"Steer straight for the junk; never mind the schooner, we will take her in hand afterwards," said he, taking in the situation at a glance. "Business first, and pleasure afterwards. They may have left some poor wretches on board the affair before scuttling her; for they have scuttled her, have they not, Mr. Johns?"

"Yes, sir; I think so. She is marvellously down by the stern; but they build these craft so queerly that one can't judge for certain."

"You miss the cussed pirate if you go after junk. He run into creek, where no possible for you to follow; not ten miles off creek," cried the Malay, stamping with impatience.

The Commander looked at him without reply, and pointed forwards. He did not take the hint, but others took it for him, and the result was the same—he went.

It was but common humanity to visit the junk, though there was but little chance of finding any live thing there. So, indeed, it turned out. It was not likely that anyone should be able to reach the shore, which was a mile distant, without

being worried to pieces by the sharks; but it was possible that such an inconvenient witness might turn up, and the prudent pirates thought it wiser to draw knife or sharp cutlass across the throats of those they left behind them on board the sinking vessel, and the sight which presented itself to the eyes of the "Snapping Turtles" who boarded her was not a pleasant one. The deck resembled a slaughter-house, and the victims lay about it like sheep, and had been killed in that brutal manner. Some may have resisted, and been shot and stabbed; but, if so, they had been thrown overboard. All our people saw had been massacred in the way mentioned. No need to search the lower deck, the water was too high already for any living thing to be there. The means taken to scuttle her were obvious; several carronades having been dragged from their places, were found with their muzzles pointed down the hatchways. A few shots thus fired through the bottom would do the job effectually enough. Only a hurried survey was possible, so fast was the water rising. To delay long would be to risk getting the boats which carried those who visited her being drawn into the vortex, and upset when she went down. Just a glance round and they were over the side and back again, and away we steamed as hard as the screw would spin after the murdering schooner.

Our visit to the junk had given her a start, which threatened her escape if the breeze maintained its present strength.

The coast was very uneven, with numerous promontories running out a considerable distance, and sometimes as she doubled these we lost sight of her for awhile, and then, on turning the corner ourselves, we saw her again; and on each occasion we had gained considerably, which increased the

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Malay's excitement. By four o'clock in the afternoon we were less than two miles from her, and when she disappeared round the next headland we beat to quarters, opened the magazine, and prepared to send her a summons from our big gun when we next sighted her; for to get round, she had to sail very close to the wind, and her progress for a time was very slow. I think that you could have picked out those who had boarded the junk, and witnessed the pirates' barbarity; there was a certain pleased, yet cruel expression upon their faces, which showed the gratification they anticipated from taking summary vengeance on the fiends before them. The Malay had plenty of sympathisers.

But when we turned the corner, expecting to find ourselves close upon the schooner, she was nowhere to be seen. The sea was smooth, the water transparent; steaming very slowly close into shore, and keeping a sharp look out for sunken rocks, we soon found out where our chase had sought shelter. A river, forcing its outlet to the sea, had cut through the rocks, forming a natural harbour; and here, beyond doubt, the pirate must have taken refuge, for there was no other opening near enough, and though when we stood directly off the mouth we could not see her within, that proved nothing, for the entrance spread and expanded into a bay, and she might be lying quite snugly on either side of it.

The Malay was sent for and questioned. He was quite certain that the schooner was there; unless she had gone suddenly to the bottom, she must be. There was just water enough on the bar for her, if steered by a man who knew the place well. There was a bar then? yes, the river carried a vast quantity of soil down with it, and this was deposited just outside. Could the *Snapping Turtle* get over? He

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thought it possible, but would not pledge himself. Perhaps, on the whole, *not*, except at high tide exactly, and it had now turned a couple of hours, or more. At least, not without touching, but with their steam force they might break a passage through.

Very vicious must the Malay have felt, to utter such hints while his own precious carcass was on board the vessel which was to make the experiment. For together with the dress, religion, and habits of barbarism, he had put off most of the hardihood which characterizes the race from which he sprang; and I don't think that any amount of injury or bad liquor would have induced our friend to run amuck.

Whatever he may have felt on this matter, however, if he was really anxious to risk a bump for the chance of getting at the schooner, our skipper was not the man to balk him. To begin with, the risk to the ship was not great; for when the tide flowed again she was sure to get off if she did stick; and the barometer was high and still quietly rising, so there was a minimum of chance of wind and sea getting up. I suppose it was in this way that the Commander reasoned when he made up his mind to incur the responsibility of trying to force the passage—a frightful one to contemplate. To risk your own life is nothing; to risk the lives of your men is more serious, though not a matter to break your heart about; but to risk your ship! If an attempt of the kind succeeds, the captain gets praise and pudding—the latter taking the form of another ship. The risk incurred was quite justifiable, praiseworthy even. But should it fail, there is a very different story to tell. Rash, reckless, careless, unfit to have charge of a penny steamer; that is the opinion of the authorities of the same man for doing the same thing under the same circum-

stances, with bad luck instead of good. But I do not believe that Fordsberry ever bothered his head about what Lords of the Admiralty, Members of Parliament, or even penny newspapers might approve, one bit. When acting in a subaltern capacity he obeyed his orders to the letter, but when entrusted with a command, he just did what he thought best for the object in view, guided only by technical knowledge as a sailor and his common sense. He now, without hesitation, went straight at the bay. My heart was in my mouth as we approached, and I gazed ahead, holding on tight for fear of being jerked overboard. It was perfectly easy to distinguish the bar, for the water upon it was rough and broken, while both on the inside and outside it was smooth and glassy. We kept in the centre, the probable channel of the river, and there seemed to be enough water; or if not quite, the shallow part was very narrow, and there were no rocks.

And now we were in the broken water; and then there was a sudden shock, bad for the crockery, followed by a grating, and two more bumps; and then the screw made a tremendous churning and to-do, but failed to move us. We were stuck fast; could get neither backwards nor forwards, and were prisoners till the next high tide. It was astonishing how little anyone seemed to think of the matter; one idea, one cry was in every head and mouth—"Boarders!" Every man knew without orders what the next move would be, and when it was evident that the vessel was fast, the boats' crews had their cutlasses on in a trice.

"Old times revived!" said Harris, sticking his revolver into the belt round his waist, "eh, Jumbo?" (I don't know why my messmates called me Jumbo, for I was small, light, and active; unless it was on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle.)

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"Old times revived, as the people who run four-horse coaches against the Brighton Railway call it. It ought to warm the cockles of your heart; quite a chapter of Tom Cringle's Log or Peter Simple, eh?"

"It looks like it, at last," I replied.

And then I preferred my request to go with the boats, and it was granted, as intimated at the commencement of this chapter.

A quarter of an hour after we struck on the bar, the two boats were making for the mouth of the creek.



CHAPTER II.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

“ HERE'S old Jaundice?”

“What, the Malay?”

“Yes, I thought nothing would hold him back from having a cut at his deadly enemies.”

“I don't fancy fighting is much in his line; he likes to take his revenge by deputy. But I say, shall we be able to bring the schooner out by daylight?”

“I fancy so, if she is not far up the creek. But I don't know about getting her over the bar.”

“Oh, I expect there is water enough for her at any time, except perhaps dead low tide. I was on board a schooner like that a while ago—a prize we took—and she drew next to nothing.”

Conversation stopped abruptly as we entered the creek. There, sharp to the left, was the schooner at anchor, with her bow towards us, close to the entrance, ready to slip out at the first opportunity. The crew was on the look out, for the moment we were well round, we got a dose of grape and a hail-shower of bullets. Splinters flew

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from boats and oars; men dropped forwards, or fell backwards, badly hit. "Give way!" cried the officers; our only chance obviously being to make a dash for it, and board. But the dead and wounded oarsmen encumbered the seats badly, and how we got along I cannot imagine; but somehow, we were under the pirates' bows before you could say "knife!" Then there was a scene of confusion, which imagination could never exaggerate. Shouting, swearing, groaning, cheering. A heavy weight was dropped into our boat, which staved it in, and that changed the desire to scramble on board, strong enough already, into a necessity. But the men could not do it! This phenomenon in boarding had never occurred to my imagination; all expeditions of the kind I had ever read of were successful. But whether our party was too small, or the pirates were too numerous, or the preparations made for our reception were too formidable, it is certain that very few set foot on the deck, and they were cut down instantaneously. The great majority were shot, stabbed, or knocked into the sea, while they still wriggled on the side. There was no lack of *go* in the "Snapping Turtles" either; they struggled hard and gamely. I saw one whose leg when thrown over the bulwark in his effort to scramble on deck was nearly severed by the blow of an axe, seize the nearest pirate by the throat with both hands, and in spite of a dozen wounds inflicted to make him let go, succeed in dragging his enemy overboard with him. Another Jack managed to get into the rigging, and jumped down alone into the middle of a score of pirates, three of whom he disabled before the life was finally hacked out of him. If you asked me how I contrived to witness these episodes, I cannot tell you, for I have no idea myself; but I certainly did.

My own share in the business resembled that of an insect clambering up a wall—the historical insect, you know, who fell down so often and started afresh for the benefit of a prisoner who was watching him, and who learnt a lesson of perseverance from his efforts, which finally contributed to his own escape. How often I tumbled into the water or on to the benches of the boat, which, though staved in, had somehow been made fast to the schooner, and did not go quite down, I have no idea; more than once or twice, I am certain. At last I found an opening, a hawse-hole, I fancy it was, and squeezed myself through it on to the deck, when a powerful copper-coloured man seized me by the collar with his left hand, and held me out at arm's length, just as you would a wet puppy. He was naked to the waist; his head, face and chest were covered with coal-black hair; one of his eyes had been destroyed by a sword-cut, which had also left a deep indentation on his forehead, and the other was blood-shot. The fighting was pretty well over, so he had leisure to dally with me, as one may with a snipe after soup, fish, entrées, and joint, and he lightly flourished the cutlass he held in his right hand, while he contemplated where he should first take a slice at me. Here was just the situation of extreme peril which I had so often yearned for; and, if you will believe me, such a foolish, inconsistent thing is human nature, that I did not enjoy it one bit! I would have gladly bound myself over to tend sheep, follow the plough, clean shoes outside a railway station, nay, even to sit in an office copying letters and doing sums for the term of my natural life, if I could only be got out of it. I thought of my mother, and what a fool I had been to go to sea; a greater fool to volunteer to help cut out the pirate; greatest fool of all to persist in scrambling on deck

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when the rest had failed, instead of making for shore, as I could see others now doing.

There is a story extant about Nelson once asking what the word "fear" meant; what sort of sensation did it describe? I do not for one moment believe that so really brave a man ever uttered such a gasconade, but of the fact of his extraordinary coolness in danger I have no doubt whatever. Yet I doubt whether Nelson himself would have liked my present position, if it were only for the humiliating helplessness of it. That, however, did not trouble me so much; it was the edge of that very sharp-looking blade, and the momentary expectation of the agonizing cut of it which absorbed my faculties. Two things I can say, however, with honest pride. I did *not* hollo for pity, and I *did* try all I knew to kick the fellow who held me. My state of suspense—at least the bodily—did not last long. No doubt when his left arm began to ache, my captor meant to take a slice at me, but, before that supreme moment arrived, a truculent-looking white nigger, dressed in a sort of Arab uniform, and wearing diamond earrings, came up and said something in an unknown tongue, whereupon I was dropped rather roughly, and kicked aft; another kick took me to a hatchway, and a third sent me down. They were scientific kickers, these pirates, and seemed to have studied the Association rules.

Do you require to know what a white nigger is, by-the-bye? Well, in the first instance, he is a contradiction in terms. I am aware that black cannot be white, but am at a loss how else to describe this pirate captain. His hair, eyes, and features were so thoroughly African, and yet his complexion was not darker than that of a high caste East Indian.

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Hurriedly and forcibly as I descended the companion-ladder, I did not hurt myself in the fall, for in those days I had a knack of alighting like a cat. Picking myself together, therefore, I made my way into a hot and very evil-smelling cabin, lit by a skylight, with no bulkheads; not the smallest hole to creep out of for a swim to the shore; that was the chance I hoped for. Once on the rocks, one might scramble over the narrow little promontory, and very likely attract the notice of the *Snapping Turtle*, who was sure to be on the lookout, and would send a boat to fetch me off. I had no doubt that many had already escaped that way. There were, doubtless, sharks inside the bay as well as out, but the shore was quite close, and it would, indeed, be bad luck to be snapped up during the few strokes necessary to get quit of the water. To steal on deck at present would only be to ensure being thrown down again, probably with greater roughness than before. But an opportunity might occur when night fell, and that was coming on fast. I lay close for about an hour, and then it grew dusk, and in the latitudes we were in, that meant dark in a trice. When it became difficult to distinguish anything a yard in front of my nose, I stole up the ladder, and knocked my head against a roof. The hatch was on, and I was a hopeless prisoner.

At the same time I heard the capstan going round, and soon a ripple of water against the schooner's side showed that the anchor was up, and we were away. The pirate's object was obviously to get out of the bay, and steal past the *Snapping Turtle* in the dark, unobserved. Perhaps they knew of her being aground, but about that I am not certain. Anyhow, they knew that at high tide she could walk into the bay, and blow them all into spilikins and lucifer matches, if she

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found them there, and that was sufficient to make them anxious to flit.

How fervently I hoped that the *Snapping Turtle* had got off the bank, and might capture us! That we might stick also on the bar! Neither of these desires were gratified, but it was not so dark but what a glimpse of us was caught in passing, a fact which was advertised to me by a bang-sing-g-g-g-bang. The firing of the gun, the rush of the shell, and its explosion, not so far, considering the light. But it required luck to actually hit us, and all the luck that night fell to the wicked. Another shell was sent, but it burst further off; and then we were lost in the night. It is rather strange to me now to remember that in spite of the blue funk I was in that night, I felt hungry. We cannot remain unconscious of physical sensations; with your dearest friend lying dead before you, or with the letter announcing your utter ruin in your hand, you would flinch if anyone trod heavily on your toe. And so, though expecting a painful death directly my captors had leisure and daylight, I began poking about to smell out something to eat; and in a locker I found some biscuits, and meat of an uncertain description, jerked beef I rather fancy, for it was very tough. But my teeth were good, and I managed to make a meal. I also got hold of a stone jar which had liquor of some sort in it; not very nice, but not too strong for a good drink to wash the beef down. Of course, it might have been something poisonous, but if it were, what did it matter? It was not likely to give me more torment than I was booked for anyhow. It proved to be wholesome enough, however, and when hunger and thirst were appeased, fatigue asserted its sway, and curling myself up in the most out of the way corner I could discover, carefully avoiding the

bunks from which I was certain to be ejected when the watch came below, I slept in spite of the entomological museum which had been diligently accumulated in the place.

I had found the provisions, and selected my sleeping corner by the light of moonbeams coming through the skylight; so that the rascals had timed their escape cunningly as well as luckily; running past the *Snapping Turtle* during the only half hour of dark there was in the night; the moon rising just after they were out of range.

As for the hatches being on, that was not done to prevent my escape, for it is very doubtful if any remembered my existence, and if I could have slipped away, I should probably never have been missed. But it was a rule of the vessel that when it went into action, all the hatches but that connected with the magazine should be closed, to prevent skulking. All shared the plunder, so all must share the danger. I must have slept uncommonly soundly, for I never heard them come down, and they were not quiet gentry. When I did awake, the sun was high and my left ear full of pain, for somebody was pulling me up by it. A black man, but Asiatic, not African, who jabbered at me in an unknown tongue for some time, presumably asking me questions. "You may talk till you are white in the face," said I, "I cannot understand you." This fact presently dawned upon him, and then he motioned me to go on deck, which I did in as dignified a manner as I could manage, with my heart down somewhere very much below the centre of gravity.

The schooner was bowling along before a stiff breeze, with all sail set, and glancing aloft with a grin of evident triumph and satisfaction, stood the gaudily-dressed captain. Presently his eyes came down and fell on me, and then I discovered that

there was someone on board at all events who spoke English. "Aha! de British officer! Very much honoured, sar, I sure by dis visit. But you no salute quarter-deck? José." (Here he said something in another language to a sailor standing by me, who gave me a back-hander in the face, which made me stagger.) "That to teach manners to British officer. Now salute him quarter-deck."

It went awfully against the grain, but I did it, with a strong mental reservation.

A knot of pirates gathered about him, and some of whom evidently knew enough English to follow what was said, enjoyed the scene hugely, though I confess that I could not see what there was to laugh at.

"Now lookee here, you big officer; you wonder why you lib, you tink we berry brave to let such a great strong man lib. You might take de ship, throw us all ober board while not looking. 'Look dare!' you say, pointing to distance; sailor look, you catch him heels, and pop he go to the sarks. Well. it am true; we berry brave; we risk that. You tink to turn up toe? All in good time, by am by. Liddle dance, liddle sing, liddle wriggle first. When I tired of you, den die soon; two or tree days praps; boys have games, but dey clumsy; can't keep alive making funny faces long." The mocking look suddenly vanished from his face, which showed nothing but earnest hate, as he added, "Lookee here! I been slave. Toil in cotton field under whip; back got scars, you could lay finger in. I hab fancy to hab little white boy for slave; little gentleman too, that better; British officer, that more best still. You clean my pipe, you make my coffee, you come at my call, and golly, if I hab to speak twice, you will know what floggee means."

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"Of course you can do what you like with me," said I; "but as for revenging your own ill treatment, you cannot do that on me. I am English, and the English have not had slaves these hundred years; my ship is now cruising to stop the slave trade. Even in South America, where I suppose you were so badly treated, slavery is done away with now."

"Too much talkee," cried the captain; "American, English, all same. Live in different country, but same breed. Bad dress that for slave boy; make bile for me when I drink my coffee after dinner. When I see English officer I long to tear him heart out! Bad, that, after dinner."

He turned and spoke in the lingo I had heard before to a man near him, who disappeared below, to get me, I assumed, some slave dress more to the pirate captain's fancy.

"Suppose we make naval officer of Jocko. Where's Jocko?" he presently cried, and an enormous ape was brought forward, trembling and anxious looking. No doubt the poor plaything found that even the tender mercies of these demons were cruel.

"You would like to be English midshipman, Jocko? Var well. Take off dat uniform, and give to de new officer," said the captain, and I undressed on the deck. "What for you keep on stockings? No rob Jocko of stockings. And de shirt; who ebber know English naval officer widout him shirt?"

The ordinary costume of the pirate crew was similar to that of an acrobat without the tights; the representation of flesh exchanged for reality, in fact. But in a twinkling I was the least clothed of the lot, every stitch I had had on me being transferred to the monkey, who allowed himself to be dressed up with the hopeless air of a condemned man undergoing the

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toilette preparatory to his execution. The grim life led by these desperadoes, who thought no more of killing men than of killing rats, had not rendered them incapable of amusement, for the gambols of the ape when he was let go to scramble about the rigging with his midshipman's clothes on, excited them to roars of laughter.

When that grew stale I had myself the honour to provide them with a little entertainment. At a word from the captain a man fastened a cord round my right ankle, and tied the other end (it was about a yard long) to a heavy chain, which lay on the deck. Then he went below, and reappeared with a long whip, which he put into the captain's hand. The latter sat cross-legged on the deck, propped up with cushions, within convenient flicking distance of me. "Dance!" he cried, and at the same moment a tongue of flame seemed to lick round me. Devils in human form have exhausted their ingenuity in devising tortures, which might gratify their revenge, their spite, or simply their passion for cruelty, but they have not found it possible to invent a pang which can surpass the cut of a whip on the naked flesh. The shame and humiliation of being stripped and tied up like a dog by these villains had made my heart swell to bursting, but all such feelings vanished at the touch of that knotted lash. No mental pain could be felt at the moment of that physical agony. I had determined beforehand to be stoical, "game" as a Red Indian; not to gratify my enemies with a cry or a prayer, whatever they did to me. But all such resolutions proved utterly futile; I had no control whatever over my words or actions in that delirium of pain. I danced about, and shrieked, and I almost fear even begged for mercy. The pirate lashed me harder and faster, until at last he sprang to

his feet with foam on his lips, and the light of a tiger in his eyes, and gave some order. Upon which I was loosened from the chain, and led to the side, where two men commenced to bind my wrists to the shrouds. But the captain threw down his whip, and said, "No; I have said you shall be my slave, and serve me, and you shall; I like that better. It am stupid to be greedy. I can flog you to death any time, when I am tired of white slave boy. P'raps catch white lady girl, take um place one day, then whip boy till he no cry out any more, and then see sharks fight for him." As the result of this reflection I was cast off, and since I bled a good deal, a pail of brine was brought, and my cuts washed with it, an operation which the performers thought a great joke, though the smart prevented my enjoying it properly. I was then thrown a cloth and allowed to rest a bit, during which time I suppose a costume after the captain's fancy was made for me, for it was all ready when I was roused up to go and put it on. Very gay it was; white cashmere Turkish trousers, ditto short petticoat; sort of Greek jacket, of red velvet, slashed and braided with gold; gold sash round the waist; yellow turban; smart outside as well as in; for the fine clothes fretted my raw weals. If that barbarous flogging was intended to break my spirit, and make me subservient, it was very judiciously applied; for though I felt about as vicious and revengeful as I well could, I remembered the burden of the villain of melodrama, "I must dissemble." Hope also whispered, "A time will come!" Anyhow there was nothing to be gained by incurring ill-treatment unnecessarily, so I set to work to perform the menial offices required of me, with all the alacrity I could. Indeed, it was a relief to me to do everything as if I were acting a part in a play; exaggerating

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my humility, haste in running when called, and anxiety to please, so as to try and make a farce of it all. Indeed, I sometimes feared that I had gone too far, and that my master would see that I was ridiculing him, but there proved to be no fear of that, and a more prudent course I could not have followed. What he craved was the utmost possible servility from one of that race to which he had been himself enslaved, and the more grossly I over-did it, the greater was his delight and triumph.

My duties were not arduous. I had to prepare his pipes. Sometimes he smoked a hubble-bubble, or water-pipe, the water in which had to be changed; and the compound smoked in it, which did not seem to be tobacco, or, at least, not entirely, but something like that stuff which is stored in old china vases in drawing-rooms, and of which I have been told dead roses are a principal ingredient, would not burn without a bit of red-hot charcoal being laid on the top. At other times he preferred the chibouque, and it was my task to keep the long cherrywood stems clean, to fill and light the pipe by sucking at the wooden end, and then, when it was well aglow, to insert the amber mouth-piece, place the bowl on a little copper saucer, and twirl the pipe round to his hand. I also prepared his coffee, every morning roasting just so much as would serve for the day, and pounding it afterwards in a mortar with a pestle, as I had often seen it done in the course of my cruises. That was what saved me. If I had been ignorant of what he wanted, and had everything to learn, I should soon have been scarified and chucked overboard. But in the course of my voyages I had seen a good deal of the life of orientals. We had rescued some from a beleaguered fortress on one occasion, and had them on board as passengers

for some time, and I had picked up some notion of their wants, and how they were to be supplied. And this African-American pirate was quite imbued with Asiatic ideas of luxury. As for his food, fortunately I had nothing to do with that beyond serving it to him, for he thought much of his cook, and would not have eaten anything prepared by other hands if he knew it. I brought him the dishes, tucked his napkin round his neck, stood behind him, as he sat cross-legged, with an ewer and a silver basin handy. After every dish I put the basin before him, poured water over his hands, and then gave him a napkin. He ate, you know, with his fingers, so I had no knives and forks to clean. After the first, I was not particularly badly treated. The captain evidently came to look upon me as a piece of property particularly belonging to himself, and therefore not to be damaged lightly. I don't know that I really added much to his comfort, but I fed his vanity, which was excessive, and I administered to his state, of which he thought a great deal. He sometimes condescended to talk familiarly with me, and asked me particulars about etiquette in the Royal Navy, and if I liked the life. I replied that I was fond of the sea, but there was not enough adventure in cruising about after slavers.

"Ah; you hab venture 'nough here," he said.

"Yes," I replied, "I hope so. It is rather a risky life, but since I am in for it, I am glad to be under such a hero for a captain."

"Oh, yes," he said, drawing himself up to his full height, "me clever man, me brave, me strong. No play tomfool with me."

Self-praise, we are told, is no commendation, but the pirate captain did not brag unduly. It was no small matter to keep

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that crew of rascals in order in the way he did it. I saw a bit of his discipline one day. He gave a surly black sailor an order, and as he moved slowly and unwillingly, he said something, I do not know what, it was in language I did not understand, which caused the fellow to turn round with a snarl, and move his hand towards his knife. The captain immediately knocked him down with an iron bolt, and then pulled his revolver out of his belt ; for the man's action might have been the signal for mutiny. It was not so, however, and the pistol was quietly replaced, while the poor wretch who had allowed his temper to overcome him, was tied up and flogged in the most horrible manner. He deserved it indeed, as they all did, but it was a hideous sight for all that, and his screams haunted me for a long time. I noticed afterwards that the iron bar which had come to his hand so readily was never far from the captain's grasp, though he carried it about and put it down with so little ostentation that I had not noticed it before. It was evident then that the command of a pirate schooner was not free from domestic as well as foreign anxieties.

Another good quality besides prompt courage which this villain possessed was a taste for music, and an appreciation of *my* singing. I really have rather a nice voice, and I made use of it to ingratiate myself. It so happened that I knew most of the songs in "The Pirates of Penzance," and, in spite of my horrible position, it amused me to sing them under the circumstances. When I sang out at the full pitch of my voice, and with exaggerated action,

"It is, it is a glorious thing
To be a pirate king,"

the captain got quite excited ; of course he never saw any-

thing like a joke, or satire, or overboard I should have gone to the sharks in a trice. On the contrary, he evidently thought that I was inspired with enthusiasm for his great and noble qualities, and that the couplets expressed a real appreciation of his exalted position. Mr. Gilbert would hardly have been able to contain himself for sardonic enjoyment, if he could have heard me singing his verses and seen the captain's pride in them.

The humour of that other song, which made me feel inclined to laugh and cry at the same time, so curiously did it apply to my position,—

“I went and bound that innocent boy
Apprentice to a pirate,”

was of course beyond him, but he liked the air, and sat nodding his head to it. I wished that I could play some instrument, and had one to play, for I was afraid he would get tired of my singing; that could not be, however, and I had to take my chance. At present, at any rate, my life was of some use to him, and so I might fairly hope to live.

How long this state of things lasted I cannot say, for I kept no count of days. Though I took the greatest care not to show any signs of anxiety, I was always looking out for the *Snapping Turtle*, and wondering how it was she failed to fall in with us. That she had got off the bank all right at high tide, I had not the slightest doubt; and I was perfectly certain that in that case she was looking for us with the utmost anxiety.

I would have given something, if I had had it, to know how many escaped after the failure to board. That the loss was very heavy I had been able to see for myself, but a

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good many scrambled on to the rocks to which the schooner was moored, and doubtless made their way across the head-land to where they could attract the notice of the *Snapping Turtle*, and get taken off, in spite of the surf. There was no pursuit, we were off too soon to allow of that, or they would doubtless have been hunted down and killed to a man. But the pirate captain knew too well the value of every minute's start to waste time that way.

What means he had taken to evade pursuit, or what port we were making for, I knew not ; but after the second night we were out of sight of land. That we were out of our proper beat I was perfectly certain, because we did not catch glimpse of a sail for several days together, and the business of a pirate must necessarily take him into the track of trading vessels.

At length, I suppose it was considered that we had given the cruiser the slip, for we altered our course, and soon entered one of the ocean highways, for sails appeared in all directions. With my ideas of pirates, I wondered that we did not pursue and attack one of several merchantmen that we passed within a few miles of. A ship and two brigs were thus allowed to go on their way unmolested. But then I found out that it is very small game your modern pirate flies at. An attack upon a European ship would not necessarily be successful, and if it were, the country to which she belonged, would send a whole fleet out to avenge her, and no native state, town, or village would dare to shield the culprits. True that the spoil would be enormous, and all trace of the transaction *might* be effaced. But on the whole, unless under very exceptional circumstances, the risk was too great. But if a score of small vessels, belonging to the three-quarter and half civilised

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countries round about those coasts, were plundered and sunk, no one said a word about it. So the prudent depredators with whom my present lot was cast, contented themselves, as a rule, with small safe gains. "Little and often" was their motto.



CHAPTER III.

HIGH, IF NOT DRY.



FRIENDLY boatswain once averred that I was the "light-artedest little cove as ever he comed across," and so you must excuse me if I have spoken of my position, or of the villains with whom I was now sailing, in a light or flippant manner. The most serious person could not have longed for a glimpse of an avenging cruiser more earnestly than I did, or experienced greater horror and anxiety than mine when we gave chase to some helpless native trader. My desire that something should happen to favour the victim's escape; my impotent longing to damage the steering gear, or let the mainsail down with a run at a critical time; my prayers for a calm, or, better still, for a blurr of smoke on the horizon, fervent, though unanswered, were all as genuine as human feelings ever were. But I confess that they never caused me to forget the part I was playing, for when life is at stake it is necessary to pay all attention to the





Ben George, London

BOARDING THE PIRATE SHIP.



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game, and I assumed the most perfect indifference to the atrocities which took place, and which, very probably, were favorable to me; for if the tiger in whose hands I was had gone too long without blood, he might have thirsted for mine.

I was the captain's special slave; my duties were about his cabin, and I had nothing to do with the rest of the crew either for good or evil. And so I was not forced to take any active part in what went on; indeed I kept out of the way a good deal, quite as much so as was prudent.

Three times was the drama enacted, and the various episodes always followed each other in exactly the same order. First the vessel was sighted, and the head of the schooner put towards her. As we approached she became alarmed, and showed a flag, of which no notice was taken, and then we commenced firing at her. Then she would commence tacking this way and that, timidly trying to escape, just like a pigeon when attacked by a hawk. Then, after being hulled a few times, she would shorten sail in token of non-resistance, when the pirates boarded her, transferred everything which was portable and worth taking away to their own vessel, murdered all on board, knocked a hole in the bottom, and departed. Once the chase, a vessel of lateen rig, flying Portuguese colours, persisted in her endeavours to escape to the end, and being well handled gave the pirate ship a good deal of trouble, and cost her a lot of powder and ball before the masts were mowed down. But this was done at last, and the quarry lay broken-winged on the water. Even then resistance was not over, and the crew defended themselves against the villains who boarded them with knives and pistols, succeeding in disabling two of them before they were finally overpowered. But the end was the same.

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It was upon this occasion that I discovered that these wretches in whose hands I was, were even more wolfish than I had supposed. The two men who had been badly hurt were brought on board, and their wounds examined with a brutal indifference to the pain given them. One who was shot through the lungs, and only half-conscious, was simply tumbled overboard then and there. The other, who had received a stab in the lower part of the body, was allowed to lie in his hammock to recover, if he could, so long as he was quiet, but in the course of the next night he grew much worse, and the groans and exclamations extorted from him by pain, interfering with the rest of his comrades, they soon voted him as good as dead, and dropped him into the sea likewise. It was perfectly true that neither of the two were likely to recover, but still, for their comrades to grudge them the small care and attention necessary to make their dying moments more comfortable, if not, for there is no knowing, to enable them to turn the corner, seemed to me to put them outside the pale of humanity altogether. Beasts, birds, and fishes, I knew, turned upon any sick or wounded member of the herd, flock, or shoal; but I had an idea that the very lowest savages stuck to those of their own tribe who needed help, except in particular cases of fatigue, peril, or hunger. I had hated the cruel brutes before, but now I despised them. I should have liked to stick a lighted lucifer into the powder magazine, and blown them all to smithereens; only that I must blow myself up along with them.

On the day after this last tragedy the wind died away, and there was a perfectly still calm. The heat was simply fearful. To be exposed to the sun was like standing before the open door of a furnace; the pitch seethed in the seams, and to

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touch the brass work was to be blistered. Awnings were rigged up, and the crew lay or squatted about under them all day, sleeping or smoking. There were lots of lemons on board, and my principal occupation was the making lemonade for the captain. I do believe I was the busiest individual on board, and that is not saying much. I have experienced some sultry weather before and since, but I shall never forget the heat of that afternoon, and the difficulty of breathing. I believed at the time that I only bore it at all by taking good swigs at every batch of the lemonade I brewed. The wished-for evening came, and the red-hot sun was withdrawn, but no air came, and it was as oppressive as ever.

The captain fell asleep, but I lay on the deck all night gasping like a carp on the grass. Suddenly, just before the hour of daybreak, a vivid flash of violet lightning zig-zagged across the heavens, and then followed peal upon peal as close as a salvoe of artillery. The rain came down in sheets, and with the force of a fire engine hose. Glare succeeded glare, crash to crash, for some time, and then, like an invisible cavalry following up the cannonade with which an attack has been heralded, down swooped the wind upon us.

Of course, there was no sail set; the schooner knew her business too well to advertise her presence at a distance when there was no use in it, so that all was ready for the storm. And yet she heeled over and tore through the water as though all her canvas had been crowded. The rapidity with which the sea rose was like magic; in less than a couple of hours the waves were tremendous, and before the day was got through, I thought over and over again that we should be pooped, for when we were in the trough of the sea the walls of water around us were so high as to keep the wind off, and we seemed

to glide back into the jaws of the pursuing wave that rushed on to engulf us.

From time to time an attempt was made to bend a bit of sail, so as to get steering-way on the schooner, but on each occasion the canvas was blown at once into ribbons, and there was nothing to be done apparently but drive before the gale. But from the faces of captain and crew, I suspected that there was a lack of sea room to render this a safe process, and that they apprehended we were rushing in a dangerous direction.

I had nothing to do ; to prepare food or smoke chibouque was impossible. If a man could get hold of a biscuit, or a handful of cold meat, and take a gnaw at it from time to time, it was as much as he could manage. I had no fear of being molested. Every one got into the most sheltered nook he could, and hung on to the firmest thing near him, or else there was a good chance of being washed out of the vessel by one of the numerous seas which burst over her. And yet, in the course of the following night, a flash of lightning showed me the captain close by me, and his face wore such an awful expression of mingled terror and defiance, spite and cruelty, that I shrank away, thankful that he had not noticed me, and took up a position in another part of the deck. Better to be washed overboard than to feel his fingers in my collar in the mood he was in. Some time after that—perhaps one hour, perhaps four, or even longer, it is impossible to say—another vivid flash revealed the cause of the pirate captain's perturbation. On our lee, not two miles off, rose a lofty, precipitous black wall of rock. We were rushing straight on to it, and our very minutes were numbered.

It was not blowing quite so hard now, and I wondered that they did not renew their efforts to get a bit of sail on, though

it was probably quite impossible to edge away now. The wind was too dead on the shore, and the schooner too close to it. Still, it is better to try all you know up to the last ; while there is life there is hope. But these villains seemed to have had all the fight taken out of them. I don't suppose that they had any consciences, but expect that they were under the influence of mere sullen fatalism. Another flash showed me that there was no beach, but the swell burst full upon the face of the cliff, rushing up afterwards to a marvellous height. If there had been a beach, however, I do not think it would have made any difference, for nothing could live in the surf made by such waves as those. It may be from the small size of the vessel I was on, but my impression is that they were far and away the biggest I have ever seen, and I have had plenty of opportunities for sampling billows all over the world.

I certainly thought that my wanderings were over on that occasion, however. There did not seem to be the slightest chance of escape, nor was there. It was a million to one, a billion to one against anything on board the schooner being alive in half-an-hour. I am not ashamed to say that I went to prayers, and fear that I was the only being on board that did so. I do not believe that one of them sued for the mercy he had never shown.

The crash came. Dash an egg-shell against the wall, and you may form an idea of it. I can tell you nothing of what happened ; one moment I was clinging to a rope, the next I was in water or foam. I had a sensation of rising rapidly to an enormous height, and then sinking to a terrible depth, and memory serves me for nothing more, till I found myself clinging like a limpet to some surface clear of the water. It was a crevice in the rock, forming a ledge, and after poking

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and wriggling about a bit, I found there was plenty of room to establish myself comfortably, and though I was numb all over, and my limbs were painful when I moved, there was nothing broken except my finger nails, which must have done a good lot of clinging and scratching to be so worn and dilapidated.

I must have been some time in a senseless condition on my ledge, for the wind had gone down very much, and only an occasional illumination of the distant sky bore testimony to the recent storm. I remember noticing this, and feeling too weary and weak to wonder where I was, or how I got there, or what would happen next. It was pleasant not to have to move or exert oneself; and so I fell asleep. When I awoke, the sun was drying me fast; indeed, I was enveloped in a little cloud of steam rising from my saturated clothing. I could now examine my position at leisure, and anyone but a sailor, an Alpine climber, or a man engaged in the building trade, would have found it a giddy business to do so. My ledge was a great height above the sea, which had undermined the lower part of the rock, so that I actually hung over it when I looked down; and the roar of the waves as they dashed against the base beneath, made me think of wild beasts in a pit, raging after a choice morsel which had been snatched from them.

How on earth I got there, I could not imagine; but it did not trouble me much at the time, my interest being centred in the more pressing question of how was I to get away? And this seemed a problem impossible of solution, for to clamber up to the top was quite impossible, even for the scalers of the Matterhorn themselves, and I would not have shrunk from matching myself against anyone in climbing in those days. If the swell were to go quite down, and there were a boat ready to

pick me up, I might harden my heart and jump. But there was no boat, and if there had been, the waves would have dashed the strongest swimmer to pieces against the wall of rock in their present angry, hungry mood.

So I sat down again, and looked dejectedly at the remains of the schooner, rolling and washing about, and thought that, after all, I was not much better off than the villains who had lately manned—or rather devilled her. This wreckage, however, attracted the natives, and I saw some figures on a headland to my left, gathered on the edge and watching, doubtless to see whether there seemed to be anything worth going round into the bay to look after by-and-bye, when the sea went down.

I took off part of my dress, and waved it, shouting and cooing in the Australian fashion at intervals. It was not long before they noticed me, and signalled to that effect, and as they wore clothes, I concluded that they were civilised, and would try to help me. How could they? that was the question. I could not see straight above me, for a rock beetled over, but, judging by the sides, the height was a good four hundred feet, and that is a long way to let a rope down.

After waiting about four hours, however, I heard a slight noise, and a rope came down in front of me, and swayed there to and fro, but of all the tantalizing things, it was just out of my reach. I leant over till I nearly over-balanced myself, but could not touch it. I nearly cried; but steadying myself with an effort to think, I took the strip of linen I had been waving, tied a knot at one end, and threw it out towards the rope. At the third attempt it caught round it sufficiently for me to draw it within reach of my hand, and I had it.

Then making a loop in which I could sit, and grasping the

rope with both hands, I let myself swing from the ledge, keeping my feet against the side of the rock as well as I could. Directly my weight was on the rope they began to haul me up, and I had not very far to travel, for the surface was more broken, jagged and sloping directly overhead, and my rescuers had been able to clamber down to within a short distance of me before lowering the rope.

My deliverers were mostly native fishermen; but there were other sorts, and amongst them a dark, olive-coloured individual, who spoke a sort of Portuguese; and, as I had somewhat more than a smattering of that tongue, we could make ourselves understood to one another, and I learned that everybody was extremely curious to learn how I got to the place from which I had been rescued.

"I was on board a schooner, which got caught in that storm, and was driven ashore here last night."

"Yes, yes; but how did you get up there?"

"You see, that schooner was a pirate, and we tried to cut her out of a bay, and failed, and I was made prisoner."

"No doubt; but what we want to know is how——"

"Why they did not kill me, I don't know; but the captain had a fancy to make a slave of me. He had been a slave himself, you see."

"Very interesting—all that another time—I dare say; but what we want to know is how, being in the water, you got up to that ledge of rock, so high above the surface?"

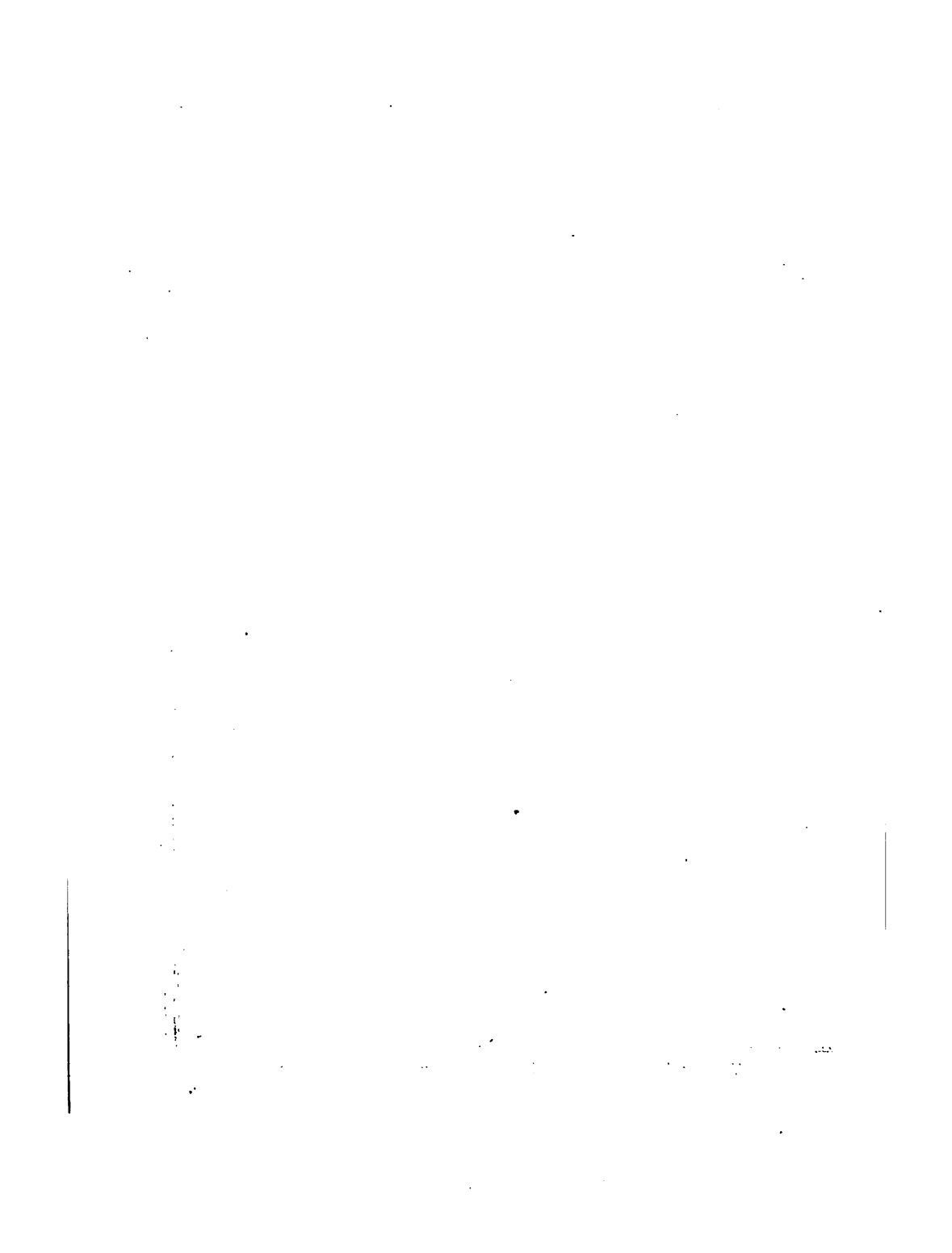
"You have hit upon the very thing which I want to know myself," said I. "I suppose I must have been washed up."

When this theory was interpreted, there arose a chorus, which the translator rendered—"Washed up! Impossible!"

"Perfectly impossible," I assented; "but, in spite of that,



"Well, look here," said I, "I will tell you who I am."—Page 291.



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it obviously happened. Impossible as it is, it is still more impossible that I should have walked up, or flown up, or been taken up and dropped by a balloon. So I must have been washed up."

They shook their heads; and we walked across a promontory a couple of miles broad, and down into a bay where there was a rude mole and a beach, and some small vessels and boats, and a thriving, busy street, in which my Portuguese friend had a general shop. He was a banker, and—you know how the future career is prognosticated from the number of buttons on the coat or waistcoat: soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, apothecary, gentleman, ploughboy, thief. Well, eliminate the two first, and perhaps the two last, and you have the occupations of my Portuguese. He was kind to me, and gave me breakfast, but, I fear, was rather disappointed at my having no money to pay for it with. I proposed to borrow some of him on my note of hand, and so pay for my keep while I waited for some means of getting off. But he did not quite like that idea.

"Excuse me," he said; "but I don't know who you are, or anything about you, except that, according to your own account, your last cruise was with a pirate."

"Well, look here," said I, "I will tell you who I am, and all about it."

And I did so, but he was not convinced. Had he a "Navy List?" I could show him my name; no, he had not. Well, then, had he a "Burke's Landed Gentry?" My father's would be found there. I am grieved to say that I do not believe that he had ever even heard of that work.

"I have seen many midshipmen, mates, lieutenants, and admirals, but they none of them looked like you," he said, shaking his head.

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"But, perhaps, they had none of them been taken by pirates, and dressed up in petticoats," I urged.

He confessed that was possible, but remained unconvinced. I remembered the story of a midshipman, in a somewhat similar plight, who established his identity, and obtained an advance by exhibiting the tail of his shirt with his name marked on it. But the pirates had not left me my shirt; and if they had, there was no "Navy List" to compare notes with.

We were discussing this knotty question under a verandah, outside his store, when a British sailor, with a basket on his arm half-full of vegetables, passed close to us.

"Robert Higgins, is that you?" I hailed.

"Bless me! Is that you, sir; and weren't you killed by them pirates?"

"Not I. How long has the *Snapping Turtle* been here?"

"Half-an-hour, sir; the boat's at the mole, and I've only got to fill this here basket for the mess."

I went straight down to the mole, got into the boat, nearly frightening one man, who believed firmly in ghosts, into the water, and before long reported myself on board the *Snapping Turtle*.

"Come on board, sir."

"Good Heavens! Where have you come from?" asked the lieutenant. "Well, I am glad to see you alive and hearty, and that I may tear up that letter I have written to break your death to your friends. But, ahem! your costume is not quite—where's your uniform?"

"Gone down with the monkey, sir."

"Gone down with the monkey; what do you mean? But I see it's a long story. Go and borrow some decent clothes,

if your own have been dispersed, and dine with me. I will hear your story after dinner."

My kit had indeed been scattered pretty well, but as the things were too small for anyone else, I easily got them back again. And I dined in the Commander's cabin, and told my story; and the spot to which I had been washed up was carefully examined by every soul on board, and through the most powerful binocular and telescope. And I regret to say that the last part of my account, to wit, that I had landed there in the way I said, was always received with incredulity.

You may have noticed how careful I have been to avoid intimating the precise part where the events I have recorded took place. You may also, though it is not likely, have searched the lists of Her Majesty's ships in commission for some years, for the name of the *Snapping Turtle*, and failed to find it. Look no more; the name is assumed. The fact is, that I have been so annoyed by people endeavouring to prove to me that it is against all laws of gravity, attraction, propulsion, hydraulics, and what not, that I could have been shot up by any wave to the height at which I most certainly found myself, that I am desirous of suppressing details which would necessarily connect this account with that which has been so rudely doubted. I was anxious that no old brother officer should take up this number of PETER PARLEY, and say, "Why, here's So-and-so telling that yarn of his in print now!"

But washed up I must have been, or how else could I have got there?



The Black Bull's Head.

CHAPTER I.

"IT IS SAFER TO TRAP A LION THAN TO BEARD HIM IN HIS DEN."

WHAT boy of twelve is there who has not read in history, in poetry, and in romance, of the Douglasses, and of their gallant deeds? Of the "Black Douglas" and the "Red Douglas;" of the banner of the bleeding heart that ever fluttered in the van of the Scottish line of battle, and seldom advanced but to victory, and of the grim, *dead* lord, the mere thunder of whose name won the hard-fought field of Otterburn, even against an English Percy?

But at last the fame and glory of these bulwarks of the Scottish throne waxed so great as to o'ershadow the throne itself. The King, whoever he might chance to be at the time, was almost a myth, for the Douglasses, like our own stout Earl of Warwick, claimed to be *king makers*, and the manufacturer must ever take precedence of the manufactured.

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Thus the Douglasses lived in a style of splendour that far outshone that of the Royal Court, their estates covered whole provinces, they made knights and held Parliaments within their territories, and too often set the authority of the Government at defiance, as well they could afford to do, when ready at any hour to bring ten thousand men into the field who would obey no command but theirs.

No wonder that all the other nobles in Scotland at last began to hate the arrogant Douglasses, and to conspire together for their overthrow; but they had to wait until there was a boy upon the throne, and until the head of that terrible house was a boy also before they dared allow their rancour to produce fruit.

Even then so great was the terror of the Douglas name, that these scurvy foes preferred using fraud to force. The Regent, Sir Alexander Livingstone, who was the projector of the conspiracy, observing to his fellow intriguer, Sir William Crichton, Governor of Edinburgh Castle, that "It was safer to *trap* a lion than to *stalk* him."

Let us look upon these two hoary plotters, as they weave their web in one of the gloomy chambers of the metropolitan fortress—that castle on a rock which the English invader has oftentimes found so hard a nut to crack.

One of them is weasand and old, having the sly look of a fox, and the other is a stalwart man of middle age, and in manner more like unto a hungry wolf; but his hair, too, is gray, and rubbed off in places from the constant friction of a helmet.

Their style of dress, though magnificent enough, is nevertheless stiff and ungraceful, for their shoulders and chests are so padded out, and their waists so pinched in, that they

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resemble stuffed figures, whilst the toes of their boots are half-a-yard in length, and turned up like skates, so that the points are fastened around their knees. Their sleeves also are so long that they have to be tied together at their backs, so that they may not be trodden on, all which goes to prove that in that remote age, even as in the present one, fashions and fools went well together.

These elderly dandies sit beside a table and opposite to a coal fire—a fuel just coming into use, but which few people would yet burn because of the deadly poison fumes and gases that were supposed by the multitude to be contained therein, indeed, there were some who were of opinion that the black and foul substance was the changed bodies of those who had died of the plague and been deep buried.

But the grim Regent and the sly Chancellor pay no heed to such old wives' tales, for they who plot and plan bloody murders have no room in their sinful hearts or wily brains for whims or crotchets; and after they have schemed and plotted, and written a letter (as though from the young King) to their wished-for victims, and which letter is intended to be their death lure, they rise to their feet, and one says unto the other, "At the feast which we will give them there shall be blood in lieu of gravy;" and that other, grasping him by the hand, retorts, with a laugh that sounds more like a raven's croak, "Aye, and at the uncovering of the black bull's head, see that the carving knives are sharp."

Let us now discover how the bait took, and to do so we must in fancy journey to another and a far away castle, whose name is Thrave—a right noble fortress to the eye, and from the summit of whose loftiest tower we may scan the entire horizon, and see neither hill, nor plain, nor valley that is not

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owned by the Douglasses ; the castle itself being only one of their many strongholds.

Behold the head of that great and princely house, a noble looking youth of but sixteen summers, a boy with the complexion of a girl, and with long curls of gold that escape from underneath his helmet, and float down over his sable armour.

Yet, though he hath the aspect of a maid, he possesses almost the strength of a man, conjoined to the heart of a lion, and many a stalwart jousting has already gone down before his spear in the sanded arena of the tilt-yard, though he has never couched it yet in real battle.

By the side of this gallant youth, who besides being Earl of Douglas, is also Duke of Touraine in France, stands a younger, but not so fair a boy. It is his thirteen year old brother Lord David, and he also, notwithstanding his tender years, is clad in complete mail, for these scions of the great house of Douglas disdain the new-fangled effeminacies of the time, and like their mighty forefathers, whose deeds they thirst to emulate, they accustom themselves to

" Lie down to rest with corslet braced,
Pillowed on buckler cold and hard :
To carve at the meal with gloves of steel,
And to drink the red wine through the helmet barred."*

But who is he whom they are evidently awaiting, and who is now ushered into the presence of the handsome and gallant boys, clad in velvets and cloth of gold, and looking like a peacock courting the acquaintance of two young eagles ?

The royal arms that are wrought in heraldic colours upon his surcoat and short cloak, denote him a King's messenger, and it is a letter purporting to be from the ten year old boy

* Scott.

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monarch that he hands to the young Earl, who at once tears it open and discovers it to run as follows:—

"TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED COUSIN,

"Why am I surrounded by grave and bearded men only? Are not the two noblest and greatest of my subjects near unto my own age? Why, then, do they hold aloof from me? Let Earl William and Lord David Douglas but repair to my Court at Edinburgh, and they shall hold the foremost place in the love and esteem of their cousin and king,

"JAMES."

Alas! the specious lie was believed, the deadly bait swallowed, and Earl William and Lord David accepted the invitation that was to be their doom.



Reading the invitation.—Page 298.

CHAPTER II.

THE SNARE IS SET, AND THE PREY IS LURED THEREIN.



HIFT we the scene once more from Thrave to Edinburgh.

Three weeks have elapsed since the acceptance of that fatal invitation, and now let us in imagination behold the two boys whom we last saw in their ancestral home, riding up the ancient High Street towards the Castle.

The armour that they *now* wear blazes with gold enrichments, and the housings of their gallant war horses almost sweep the ground.

Above them floats the banner of the *cleft heart*, which has so often waved in the van of Scottish victory, and they are followed by two thousand mounted knights and men-at-arms, all of them vassals of their more than princely house, and well may the sober citizens stare at the gallant show, for well they wot that their King can make none like unto it.

But suddenly the procession is met by some officers of the royal court, who, with many bows and apologies, inform the young Earl of Douglas that his numerous following must find quarters in the city, for that, unfortunately, the Castle has not the necessary accommodation for them.

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Thereupon some hesitation and confusion ensues, and Sir Malcolm Fleming, a near kinsman, who rides next to Earl Douglas, whispers in his ear—"I have a suspicion that some treachery is meditated. My dear lord, for heaven's sake, venture not into yon hornet's nest without thy following."

But, after a moment's thought, to him the brave young noble makes reply, "The King will do me no harm, and his creatures and parasites *dare not*. Besides, was a Douglas *ever* known to turn his back upon peril; and, if not, shall I disgrace my forefathers by fleeing from its mere shadow?"

Then, at his bidding, his pursuivant sounded his trumpet, and made proclamation to the effect that both knights and men-at-arms should quarter themselves upon the inhabitants, and that a fair price would be paid for their lodging and respective needs; after which the Earl and his brother, Lord David, with Sir Malcolm Fleming, and a handful of the more distinguished of his train, continue their course onwards to the Castle, whose ponderous gates and portcullis presently clash and clang in their rear.

The doomed boys are now fairly within the web of the spider, and we shall see anon how the meshes were tightened about and around them.

In one of the most splendid of the reception chambers of the Castle, the little King receives and warmly welcomes his two guests.

He himself is unfeignedly glad to see them; but, close in his rear, like an ugly shadow, stands Livingstone the Regent, the older of the two men whom a little while ago we beheld conspiring with the Governor of the Castle how the two boy Douglasses should be lured to their doom.

He also welcomes the young Earl and his brother, and tells

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them, with a crafty smile, that "'Twas he who first thought how much His Majesty would enjoy their society, and relish them for his friends and companions."

But, notwithstanding his urbanity, the lads receive the old courtier's honeyed words coldly, for they know him to have been their gallant father's uncompromising and unscrupulous foe, and they have not lived long enough in the poisoned atmosphere of courts to be able to put on hypocrisy as a cloak.

Then, whilst the King and his guests were pleasantly conversing, there all at once sounded the ominous blast of a trumpet, and a train of horse and foot debouched into the square of the quadrangle below, evidently with the intention of quartering themselves in the fortalice, and that notwithstanding the report which had been made unto the Douglasses that there remained no further accommodation therein.

They were fighting men, well armed, and he who rode at their head clad in complete mail, but with the visor of his plumed helmet raised, was that other man who had held bloody council within the small chamber of David's tower, even he whose aspect was more like unto a fox than a wolf; in other words, Crichton the Chancellor.

And as he passed underneath the window he looked up into the face of the other hoary knave, who by that time had crossed the room thereto, and both the stern, upward glance, and the return leer, seemed to say, "The hour of their doom approaches, and all is prepared to render it certain."

All was *indeed* ready; and now let us in imagination survey the great banquetting hall of the Castle, whose wainscotted walls of black oak reflect the sheen of a thousand weapons of divers kinds, that are hung thereon in set and skilful

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devices, whilst above them float rent and riven standards taken in battle, interspersed with others that are blazoned with the armorial bearings of Scotland's noblest and bravest sons, amongst the latter being the cleft and bloody heart of Douglas, though it had been newly hanged there.

A huge fire of mighty oak logs burns on an open hearth between dogges at either end of the hall, and a table runs almost its entire length, which is ready spread for a sumptuous feast, whilst the vast and gloomy apartment is lighted by a hundred great waxen torches, each of which is grasped in the mailed hand of a man-at-arms, fifty of whom stand motionless as iron columns, at set distances apart, all around the great chamber.

At last the gay fanfare of trumpets peels forth, and then the boy King, with a youthful Douglas on either side of him, enters the banquet hall under the looped-up curtains that are at one end, and the three laugh and jest merrily as they advance, whilst behind them stalk the wily Chancellor Crichton and Livingstone the fierce Regent, muttering to each other under their beards, and they are followed in turn by lesser knights and chiefs, but all of them men who are of their own blood or name, or who hold their fiefs or lands of them, and are therefore ready to do their bidding in all things.

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CHAPTER III.

THE BLACK BULL'S HEAD. THE DUNGEON AND THE BLOCK.

WHEN the feast had continued for a brief period, and just as the boy King had laughingly declared, for the third time, that he had never so much enjoyed himself before, a huge covered silver dish was borne into the hall by two serving-men, on account of the weight thereof, and placed on the table before the monarch, who, commanding the cover to be raised, it was forthwith done, and lo, there upon the dish lay the uncooked, unskinned, and horned head of a huge black bull, just as it had been stricken from off the body.

In those rude times this hideous dish was the acknowledged symbol of a violent and bloody death, and the boy Douglasses, feeling that the menace was directed at themselves, sprang to their feet, and drew their swords, the young Earl shouting, "There is black and filthy treachery here. They would murder us even under tryst, but, by St. Bryde, many shall fall with us."

But even as the gallant youth spoke, and whilst Sir Malcolm Fleming and the handful of the Douglas faction were preparing to rush to their young chiefs and Lord David's support, a band of Crichton's armed vassals (even them who had surreptitiously been brought into the fortalice an hour

THE BLACK BULL'S HEAD.

previously) burst forth from an ante-chamber, that was called the tiring-house, and flinging themselves upon Earl William and Lord David, and their slender following, overcame them by sheer strength of numbers, and thereafter bound them tightly with cords.

Vainly the boy King, with the tears coursing down his cheeks, pleaded for them. His prayers and upbraidings were of none avail, for Crichton the Chancellor answered them with, "Sire, when you shall have learnt wisdom, and become a man, you will thank your faithful and devoted servants for this night's work;" whilst Livingstone, the Regent, added, with a ferocious scowl, "It were more seemly for a King of Scotland to *rejoice* over the discomfiture of his foes than to bemoan it."

Let us change the scene to the interior of a judgment hall. Yes, a *judgment*, as contra-distinguished from a *justice* hall, for of justice there was none.

At the one end stand the two noble Douglasses; Earl William, with his robust young form, his fair, girl-like face, and the long golden curls rippling over his shoulders, and Lord David, thinner and darker, yet, notwithstanding, a fine boy for his thirteen years, and as undaunted in aspect as his brother.

Yes, bold and unflinching they stand, with their arms strapped tightly down by their sides, yet with twelve men-at-arms for a guard over them as well; and both smile scornfully as Livingstone reads out to them the charges whereon they stand arraigned. "On two occasions, namely at Corstorphine and at Thrave, conspiring against the life and governance of His Majesty the King," with much more to the same effect.

But as the Regent concludes, the King himself springs to

THE BLACK BULL'S HEAD.

his feet, for he has been constrained by his fierce advisers to be present in person at the mock trial, and exclaims in accents of fiery indignation :

"I would pit my soul's salvation against their guilt. 'Tis a false charge, and I will ever declare it to be so. Livingstone, Crichton, when I am a man and *really* a King, I will hold you accountable for whatever you do unto them. Beware, ye both, for the block and axe which you are preparing for the noble Douglasses, will one day be fitted unto your own necks ; I swear to you that they shall."

But to this burst of boyish anger the Chancellor replied with the scriptural quotation, "When I was a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things;" whilst the Regent castellan went on with the mock trial as though the young monarch had not spoken, and after many a foresworn witness had been questioned and duly perjured himself, he declared the case to be fully proven, and proceeded to pass on the Douglasses sentence of death ; after which, although they requested permission to kiss the King's hand ere they were led away, it was refused unto them, and they were straightway committed to a dark and terrible dungeon.

And now we will try to describe the last scene of this awful tragedy.

It is on a chill November morning, and furthermore the Vigil of St. Catherine the Virgin, that in one of the narrow and contracted courts of the old Castle, you have to picture to yourselves a black, velvet-draped block, and standing beside it a tall, gaunt man, dressed in tightly-fitting scarlet raiment, and leaning on a huge axe.

All at once a door at the opposite end of the court opens,

THE BLACK BULL'S HEAD.

and first issue there through six men at arms, carrying torches, and then Earl William and Lord David Douglas bound, and guarded by men with drawn swords, and last of all, another ~~pass~~ of armed men who carry long halberts.

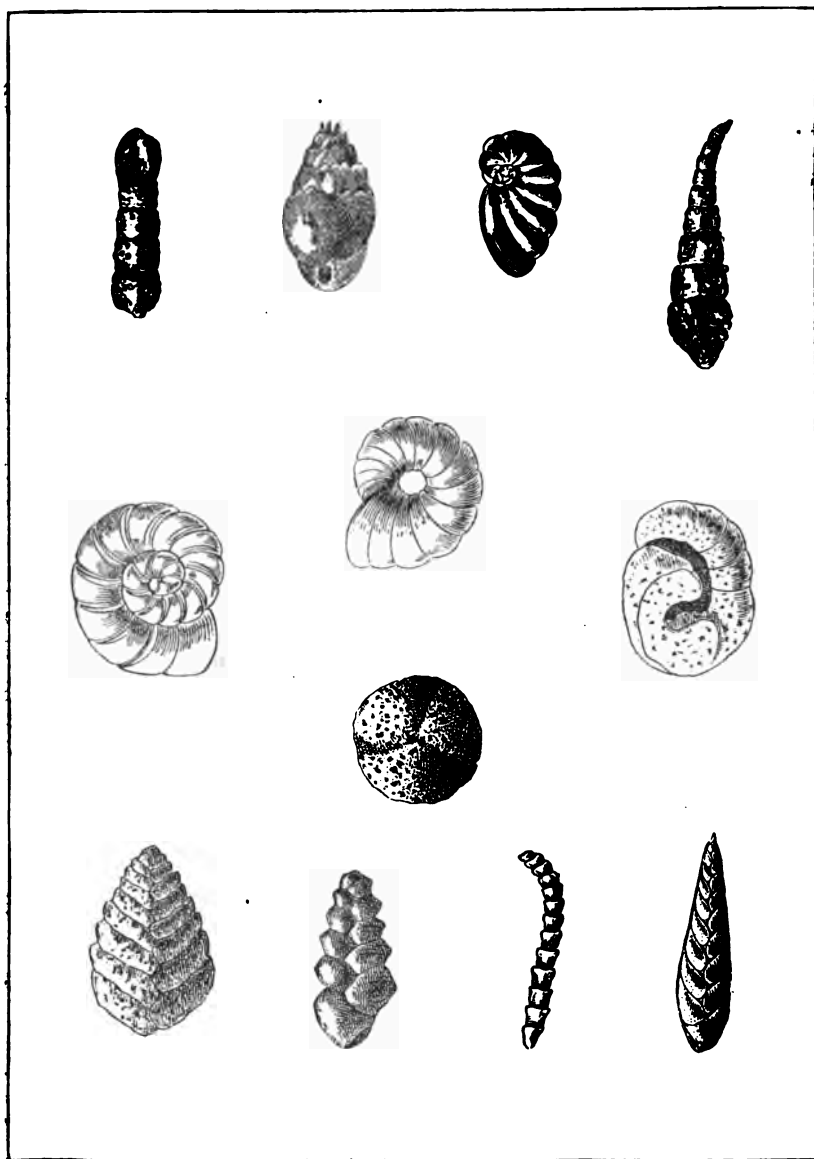
The block is reached, and the two noble boys regard it without a shudder.

"It seems to me as short a road to Heaven as any other, Davie; and the path is made pleasant by the thought that they who have cut out the way will have to tread it after us," says Earl William, and as the words escape him he glances scornfully towards a window high up in the wall, out of which the Regent Livingstone and the Chancellor Crichton are surveying the scene with grim delight.

But the younger boy responds to his brother's speech with, "Willie, let us not look back, but press forward to the prize that lies before, and thank God, if we can, that we have not been permitted to live long enough to forfeit it."

Then the brothers embrace, and the young Earl kneels down and lays his head upon the block with a smile, and the next instant it is stricken off at a single stroke by the headsman, for the neck is too white and young to be over tough.

The little Lord David next met his fate just as heroically, and, as his head rolled over on to the rough paving-stones beside his brother's, the Chancellor Crichton muttered, "So fall the King's enemies," to which the Regent retorted, "And also *ours*."



Some shells—greatly magnified—from which chalk is formed.

Chalk.

WHEN the Channel is lively, and the steamers crossing it heave and undulate in a manner which tickles the sides, and makes giddy the brains of travellers who are not accustomed to the peculiar motion, many a one who feels that it is a question of minutes whether he succumbs to sea-sickness or not, strains his eyes in search of the white line of chalk cliffs which will tell him that the termination of his ordeal is approaching.

"It was this chalk coast line which caused England to be called Albion, and therefore I suggest that every Englishman ought to know what chalk is," I observed to a young friend of mine at Dover one day lately.

"Of course he ought," was the ready response. "Everybody does, I should say."

"Then what is it?" I asked.

"Why, of course it is the stuff tailors score your new coats with when you try them on, and they don't fit; and that lecturers draw figures on a black board with."

"That is the *use* of chalk; I asked what chalk itself was."

"Oh, why, if you take a grammar, or book like that, and write on the cover **JOOF**, as I scratch it now in the dust with my stick, in chalk, and then clap it suddenly on a fellow's back, it leaves the impression **FOOL** on his jacket."

"That is the *abuse* of chalk; how often am I to repeat that I asked what chalk was, and not what you could do with it?"

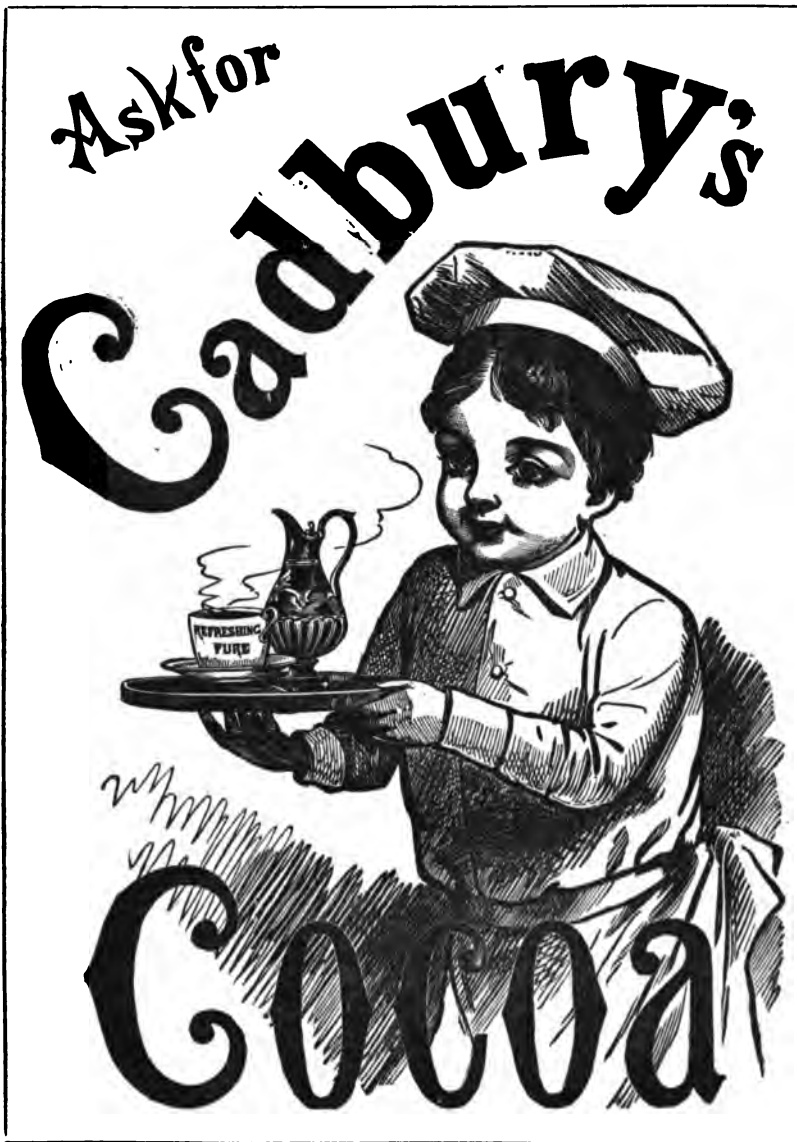
"Oh, why, well, of course chalk is—chalk, you know."

"Meaning that you do not know what it is, after all, then."

If you do not know either, perhaps you might like to be informed.

CHALK.

Chalk, then, is a conglomeration of shells, either piled up, crushed fine, or microscopical. The last are so tiny that it has been calculated by one investigator that a visiting card covered with a layer of chalk contains nearly a hundred thousand shells of animals. These shells are formed of carbonate of lime, and the varieties of chalk formation are accounted for by this theory: At one period of the earth's history the exuberance of life in the oceans was probably far greater than at present, and therefore the formation of limestone rocks from the deposit of shells went on much more rapidly. In calm seas these shells were deposited quietly, and grew together, layer upon layer, without fracture or injury, so that after so many thousands of years we find the delicate outlines and minute projections preserved. But in stormy seas the shells, ground together by the action of the waves, were crushed into dust, which also went to form future mountains. But you would expect that the same sea would not always continue for ages in the same boisterous condition, in all stages of the bottom gradually rising from the accumulation of the remains of molluscs, and you would be right. In examining chalk strata we find rocks formed of perfect shells, merging gradually into others, where they are composed of impalpable powder. As for the third description of chalk, that which is formed of shells too minute to be distinguished by the naked eye, much less to be injured by any of the physical forces of Nature, the time it must have taken to accumulate enough for a tolerable hill, is bewildering to think about. There are about ten millions of these shells in a pound. One might as well try to form a correct idea in one's mind of Space, or the National Debt.



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With a view to your further kind patronage, we agree to supply one of the rings therein mentioned, as a sample, in exchange for the Coupon and the nominal sum of Two Shillings (2s.) as a contribution towards expenses. Delivered free on receipt of Coupon, with Stamps or Money Order. The ring is everything that is claimed for it, its "appearance" is undistinguishable from genuine, and its wear is guaranteed *satisfactory*. The numerous testimonials we have received, *all entirely unsolicited*, and speaking highly in their praise, warrant our assertion that "they only require to be better known to obtain a very wide popularity and deserved success," and with this idea we make this offer. At the present time, when the *same stones* are obtaining almost fictitious amounts, we are confident that our offer will be appreciated. We are not anticipating a profit, our object being to introduce an article that will ensure future patronage and recommendation. We have made these rings our speciality, and we strongly urge you to take immediate advantage of this offer, as it may not be again repeated.

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It is extensively used by Medical Men in their official and private practice, at home and abroad, who have given numerous written testimonials of its wonderful efficacy.

SPECIMEN TESTIMONIALS.

The "TIMES," August 13, 1877.—"From our own Correspondent with the Russian Army.

"Okoum, July 23, 1877.

"The want of sanitary arrangements in the Russian Camp was dreadful, and had we remained there a few weeks longer, dysentery and typhoid fever would have played more havoc in our ranks than the bombs of the Turks. I myself acquired an unenviable reputation as a doctor, owing to my being provided with a small bottle of CHLORODYNE, with which I EFFECTED MIRACULOUS CURES."

From JOHN TANNER, M.D., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., L.S.A., L.M., Physician to Farringdon Dispensary, Physician to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's Metropolitan College, London, &c.

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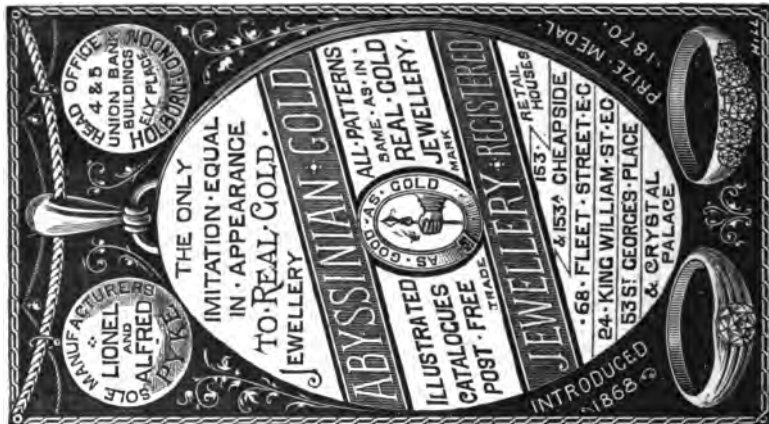
N.B.—Lord Chancellor Selborne, Lord Justice James and Lord Justice Mellish, decided in favour of Freeman's Original Chlorodyne, and against Brown and Davenport, compelling them to pay all costs in the suits. See Times of July 24, 1873.



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To J. C. Eno, Esq., Hatcham, London, S.E.

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